



BRSR
BLUE RIDGE SCOUT
RESERVATION 

LEADER'S GUIDE

2026



Table of Contents

Dear Camp Leaders & Parents,.....2

GUIDE INTRODUCTION..... 3

CAMP PROGRAM FEES..... 4

2026 SUMMER CAMP DATES..... 6

PREPARING FOR YOUR SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE.....6

CAMP POLICIES..... 10

HEALTH & SAFETY AT CAMP..... 16

CAMP ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE.....19

TRANSPORTATION..... 19

PARENTS & VISITORS..... 25

PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES..... 26

CAMP POWHATAN..... 27

NEW RIVER ADVENTURE..... 34

BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINEER..... 40

HIGH KNOLL TRAIL CAMP..... 44

VOYAGEUR TREK..... 51

SCUBA..... 54

Dear Camp Leaders & Parents,

Welcome to the Blue Ridge Scout Reservation (BRSR) summer camp program of 2026! We are so excited to celebrate a summer of adventure with you and your Scouts in the cool, secluded mountains of Virginia!

This Leader's Guide will prepare your unit for a fun and successful summer with us. We are happy to welcome Scouts of all backgrounds and ages from all over the country to participate in a wide breadth of Scouting programs and activities. Our camp staff has been busy preparing to bring you the best summer camp program possible and are ready to share their knowledge and skills with your Scouts! Our campsites and facilities can accommodate Scouts of all abilities and skill levels, and we will work diligently with you to make your camp experience the best it can be.

Be sure to stay up to date on any updates made to this guide and our program offerings at BRSR by visiting our camp [webpage](#).

Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns. We will host online informational webinars throughout the spring to help unit leaders further understand what they can expect from a camping experience at BRSR. The webinar schedule is posted on the BRSR webpage and detailed in the schedule below.

We are looking forward to a bright summer filled with fun and Scouting spirit!

Yours in Scouting,

Bethany Brownfield



Reservation Director
Blue Ridge Mountains Council
bethany.brownfield@scouting.org



All BRSR camps and programs are nationally accredited by the Scouting America NCAP program.

GUIDE INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the opportunity to read over this informational Leader's Guide. We know it's a bit on the long side but a Scout is prepared! We suggest giving it a couple of read-throughs before the summer. Within your unit, please appoint one leader to act as your Camp Coordinator to organize your Scouts' planned camp experiences and communicate with our staff. Share this guide with your unit leaders and parents to ensure everyone is prepared for your upcoming summer camp experience. We understand that your unit will likely participate in multiple programs, so please make sure the leader in charge of each of those programs knows where to find program-specific information. If you look through this guide and find that there is information missing, please share that with our staff. We are always looking for suggestions to improve for next year.

The Blue Ridge Mountains Council appreciates your continued support of the Scouting program and sincerely hopes that this year's summer camp will be one of your greatest Scouting experiences.

The Blue Ridge Scout Reservation is home to Camp Powhatan and Camp Ottari, with many miles of forested mountain and trails in between. This summer, we are hosting our base camp merit badge and Brownsea Island programs at Camp Powhatan, while Blue Ridge Mountaineer, High Knoll Trail Camp, and Voyageur Trek will be based at Camp Ottari. Our New River Adventure and Scuba programs will be based at Camp Powhatan, but will include many activities at other locations across Virginia and West Virginia.

COVID-19 NOTICE

The Blue Ridge Scout Reservation will be following local, state, and national guidance concerning any unforeseen changes to Covid-19 policy. We will communicate any Covid-19 policy updates clearly and promptly to ensure the safety of all units and Scouts before camp begins. We do not currently expect to require any Covid policies such as face covering and social distancing, but we will continue to monitor the recommendations of health experts.

CONTACT US

BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS COUNCIL	(540) 265-0656 Mailing address: PO Box 7606, Roanoke, VA 24019 Office location: 6342 Peters Creek Rd NW, Suite A, Roanoke, VA 24019
CAMP POWHATAN	(540) 980-3787 *phone staffed June 1- July 31 2600 Max Creek Road, Hiwassee, VA 24347
CAMP OTTARI	(540) 980-4762 *phone staffed June 10-July 31 2881 Simpkinstown Road, Hiwassee, VA 24347

CAMP PROGRAM FEES

PARTICIPANT TYPE	REGULAR FEE	EARLY BIRD FEE
Powhatan Base Camp Scout	\$492	\$462
Powhatan Base Camp Adult	\$212	N/A
Brownsea Island Scout	\$514	\$483
Blue Ridge Mountaineer Scout	\$492	\$462
Blue Ridge Mountaineer Adult	\$212	N/A
High Knoll Scout	\$492	\$462
Voyageur Scout	\$492	\$462
Voyageur & High Knoll Adult	\$492	\$462
New River Adventure Scout	\$530 average*	\$500 average*
New River Adventure Participating Adult	\$530 average*	\$500 average*
New River Adventure Supporting Adult	\$212	N/A
Scuba Scout & Adult	\$750	\$720

*New River Adventure participants pay a flat fee of \$270 (or \$240 early bird). The rest of their fee depends on their selection of daily activities for the week.

Additional fees apply for some merit badges and specialty programs. Please see the program descriptions below for additional details.

DISCOUNTS & FINANCIAL AID

1. Returning units: 2025 returning units that place their \$200 deposit for BRSR 2026 before September 1, 2025, will be eligible to apply the 2025 camp fees to their 2026 registration. This discount applies to both Scouts and adults and will be automatically applied to each individual's registration.
2. Early Bird: Individual Scouts who complete their online camp registration for any BRSR summer program before April 1, 2026, are eligible for the \$30 Early Bird Discount, which will be automatically applied to each individual's camp registration. This discount is exclusive to the youth Scouts attending BRSR in 2026; the adult leaders attending camp will not receive it.

3. Service projects: Units can receive a \$20 discount for each of their Scouts registered for camp if the unit completes a service project at Blue Ridge Scout Reservation before May 15, 2026. Contact us to schedule your unit's service project. Service projects performed off BRSR camp property or without the pre-approval of the Reservation Program Director will not qualify for the discount.

4. Free leaders: One free adult leader will be awarded for every 10 Scouts registered to attend BRSR in 2026.

5. BRMC camperships: Funds are available to BRMC units with Scouts in need of further financial assistance. The application for assistance can be accessed through attendee registration on Black Pug. Please review the list of required information with the Scout's family before completing the campership application.

6. Out-of-council camperships: Our limited campership funds are available primarily to BRMC units with Scouts in need of further financial assistance. Out-of-council units who have Scouts with financial circumstances that would prevent them from attending BRSR may apply for consideration but must understand that assistance for BRMC units is prioritized. Please review the list of required information with the Scout's family before completing the campership application. You may also find out if your home council has campership program funds that can be applied to your camp visit.

7. Ambassador Program: Troops that refer a new unit (one that hasn't attended our camps in the past three years) will receive \$5 off per Scout for 2026 and recognition as Camp Ambassadors. The new troop will enjoy locked-in rates from 2025 and a special welcome package. Please visit the Camp Ambassador page on our camp website for more details.

2026 SUMMER CAMP DATES

Week		Camp Powhatan	New River Adventure	Blue Ridge Mountaineer	High Knoll Trail Camp	Voyageur Trek	Scuba
1	June 14-20	x	x	x	x	x	x
2	June 21-27	x	x	x	x	x	x
3	June 28-July 4	x	x	x	x	x	x
4	July 5-11	x	x	x	x	x	x
5	July 12-18	x	x	x	x	x	x

Our staff reserves the right to cancel any of these programs for certain weeks depending on registration and staffing constraints but will communicate early and often with those registered. If you are interested in participating in a program during a week for which it is not listed as available, please contact us to see if we can accommodate your requests.

PREPARING FOR YOUR SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE

Hold-A-Place reservations are open through **December 31, 2025**. A nonrefundable \$200 deposit will hold your spots. Normal registrations open **January 1, 2026**, with \$200 deposit required.

The first day to fill reserved slots is **January 1, 2026**. Registration closes two weeks prior to the start of the camp week. **Final payments are due by May 31, 2026**. Fees are based on when payment is applied, not when a check is mailed. Final payment is due 2 weeks prior to the start of camp and registrations are closed. Attendees may be substituted up to the Friday before camp.

REFUND POLICY

The Reservation strives to provide the very best program. We sign contracts with staff and vendors in February, and cancellations after April 1 undermine our ability to provide this quality program. In cases of death of an immediate family member, sickness and injury, or military transfer we will refund all but 25% of fees paid when verified by a physician, military commander, or other such official. Reasons such as vacation schedule, summer school, and last-minute changes of mind are not acceptable reasons for refunds.

Circumstances outside those defined in the Blue Ridge Mountains Council refund policy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the BRMC Camping Committee, and refunds will be granted at their discretion. All refund decisions are decided upon and remitted from the Council Service Center. To request a refund, fill out the form available on the Blue Ridge Mountains Council [webpage](#).

The Blue Ridge Mountains Council reserves the right to cancel any program listed due to insufficient attendance or other extenuating circumstances. Alternate programs or refunds will be offered.

PLANNING FOR SUMMER CAMP

Please add these dates to your calendar.

October - January

- Elect/appoint a Summer Camp Coordinator to be the point of contact to the Camp Registrar.
- Obtain camp leadership sufficient to meet national Scouting Safeguarding Youth rules.
- Meet with your unit committee to discuss summer camp plans.
- Develop a camp attendance and budget plan to assist scouts with summer camp fees.
- Begin promotion with Arrow of Light dens to ensure transition.
- Share camp promotional materials with youth and adults.
- Registrants can fill their reserved slots starting on **January 1, 2026**, by paying individual attendee fees and inputting attendee personal information.

February

- BRSR Leaders Webinar **February 3, 2026, at 7 PM**. This webinar will focus on program options, merit badge schedules, deadlines, and Black Pug registration. Register for the meeting [here](#).
- Begin fundraising projects within your unit to help Scouts with camp fees.
- Schedule Order of the Arrow elections with your local chapter.

March

- Half of individual registrant fees are due **March 1, 2026**. This does not include merit badge fees. For example, if a Scout is registered for base camp at Powhatan, they will owe \$231 on March 1. New River Adventure participants owe \$240 on March 1 since activity fees cannot be calculated until after they are selected.
- For Scouts registered for weeks 1 and 2, registration opens for merit badge classes and New River Adventure activities on **March 1, 2026**. This option will only be open to individuals who have at least half of their registration fees paid.
- BRSR Leaders Webinar **March 3, 2026, at 7 PM**. This webinar will focus on camp forms, leadership expectations, adult leader courses, and facilities. Register for the meeting [here](#).
- For Scouts registered for weeks 3, 4, and 5, registration opens for merit badge classes and New River Adventure activities on **March 15, 2026**. This option will only be open to individuals who have at least half of their registration fees paid.
- Begin applying for Camperships for any Scouts in your unit who may need financial assistance to attend summer camp. Apply through attendee registration online.
- Hold a parent's night program.
- Secure transportation to camp.
- Issue each Scout a personal equipment list and appropriate medical form.

April

- Pay each Scout's balance in full and complete their online camp registration by **April 1, 2026**, to receive our special Early Bird discount of \$30 per Scout.
- The last day to cancel attendee slots without fees or penalties is **April 1, 2026**. Empty attendee slots will be eliminated from units' Black Pug registrations. Contact the BRMC Office to drop attendees. Any cancellations after this deadline must be processed through the BRMC refund process.
- BRSR Leaders Webinar **April 7, 2026, at 7 PM**. This webinar will focus on our high adventure and specialty programs, including New River Adventure, Blue Ridge Mountaineer, High Knoll, Voyageur Trek, and Scuba. Register for the meeting [here](#).
- Begin setting a plan for camp with the patrol leader's council.
- The Unit Committee should check with all parents of Scouts not registered for camp, including Arrow of Light dens.

May

- Pre-camp forms are due online on **May 1, 2026**. These forms are all linked in the Attachments section of the Black Pug registration page. They include:
 - Dietary Needs
 - Special Accommodations
 - Early Arrival or Late Arrival
 - Chartered Bus
- Campership applications will no longer be accepted for consideration after **May 1, 2026**. These discounts are not guaranteed upon application. Applicants will be notified within two weeks of this date of their application status.
- BRSR Leaders Webinar **May 5, 2026, at 7 PM**. This webinar will focus on camp forms, check-in and check-out, daily camp schedules, and final payment. Register for the meeting [here](#).
- Out of council units only: secure a copy of the current Accident & Sickness Insurance from your home Council Service Center (request proof of Accident & Sickness from your accounting department).
- All camp fees are due by **May 31, 2026**, including outstanding merit badge fees. A late fee of \$20 will apply to any registrant with unpaid fees after this deadline. Units who arrive to camp with outstanding fees will be expected to pay any outstanding camp fees at check-in, including the late fee.

Two Weeks Prior to Your Camp Visit

- Secure location of parents and emergency numbers while Scouts are in camp.
- Finalize transportation arrangements and plan your arrival at camp. Add an extra ten minutes to your schedule to account for the drive up Seven Bridges Road to Powhatan. (If it doesn't take you at least ten minutes to get up the road, you're going too fast. Beware the camp radar gun.)
- Collect all forms that must be submitted at camp check-in. These forms include:
 - Scouting Annual Health and Medical Record
 - Unit Health Officer Form
 - Prescription Medication Dosing Form
 - Early Release Form
 - My.Scouting roster for your unit to show all youth and adults are registered
 - New River Adventure required forms that may include the [NRA parental waiver](#), [ATV waiver](#), [whitewater rafting waiver](#), and [horseback riding waiver](#), [Virginia Boating Safety Course](#) Card

Day of Departure

- Make sure all Scouts and leaders have their gear, medical forms, medications, supplemental food (if needed), and other required forms. Please separate medical forms by program (Camp Powhatan, New River Adventure, High Knoll, etc.) to expedite check-in.
- If anyone is sick or exhibiting flu-like symptoms, do not bring that individual to camp. Everyone will be screened by our health staff, and knowingly bringing sick individuals could exclude your entire group from camp participation.
- Review all camp policies and unit policies with all individuals attending. Everyone should fully understand the expectations for their behavior and be prepared to act according to the Scout Oath and Law on camp property.

REGISTRATION

All Blue Ridge Scout Reservation registrations must be made using our Black Pug service [here](#). We do not accept paper registrations. If you do not have access to the Internet or run into trouble accessing Black Pug, please call the BRMC Office and ask for assistance.

Additional help using Black Pug services can be found [here](#) or by calling the BRMC Office. Changes to individual registrations can be made up to two weeks before the start of camp, and attendees may be substituted up until the Friday before camp. Remember that your unit should appoint one Summer Camp Coordinator to complete this online registration for your entire unit.

Once your unit has completed account setup within Black Pug, please add profile information for all individuals, including member ID, rank, date of birth, and Safeguarding Youth certification for adults. This information helps our staff ensure that your unit is following Safeguarding Youth rules and that all of your Scouts and adults are able to register for age-appropriate activities. If a registration has “missing information” they will not be able to check out or make changes.

CAMP POLICIES

SCOUTING REGISTRATION

All summer camp programs at the Blue Ridge Scout Reservation are nationally accredited by Scouting America. All staff and participants, youth and adults, must be currently registered members of the Scouting America. Additionally, the Reservation must enforce the policy that only registered Scouts attend related functions at camp. **All attending adults must be registered with Scouting America and have current Safeguarding Youth training.** Children and/or siblings of those registered for a specific program, including Cub Scouts, are not to attend unless the program has been specifically designed with adequate facilities to handle them. Leaders will need to bring a printed copy of the unit’s My.Scouting roster to verify that all their participants are members.

SCOUTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

Scouting America promotes a culture where each youth, leader, volunteer, and employee feels a sense of belonging and builds communities where every person feels respected and valued. Leading by example and encouraging each other to live by the values expressed by the Scout Oath and Scout Law, we welcome families of all backgrounds to help prepare young people to serve as successful members and leaders of our nation’s increasingly diverse communities.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ADULT LEADERS

In keeping with Scouting policy, at least two registered adult leaders 21 years of age or over are required at all Scouting activities. A registered female adult leader, 21 years or older, must be present for any activity that includes female youth or adult participants.

Our specialty programs are provisional, meaning that your scouts may be able to participate with limited or no unit adult leadership (staff leadership is provided), but unit adult participation and supervision is encouraged.

All unit leaders should expect to assist our staff in providing a safe and fun experience for the Scouts. Unit leaders are responsible for managing the discipline and behavior of youth and adults in camp. The camp leadership team is available to help with any issues that may occur. A camp chaplain is available upon request for counseling. Unit committees should be sure that the camp leaders are trained, and they understand their responsibilities while in summer camp.

As an adult leader, your role includes:

- Maintaining unit safety and discipline at all times.
- Coordinating all unit and individual activities with your Scouts.
- Maintaining awareness of each Scout's personal goals and objectives at camp.
- Participating in camp activities on a daily basis. This will include program area visits, attendance at leader's meetings, and collection of progress reports of each Scout's activities.
- Being prepared to help others, specifically other camping units and staff personnel as needed.
- Monitoring and evaluating unit and Scout progress in camp and providing counseling, guidance, and encouragement.
- Reviewing the daily schedule of unit activities with fellow leaders before departure for camp, including experienced camp leaders like your Unit Commissioner.
- Completing and compiling camp evaluations at the end of your visit.
- Serving as positive role models for youth. This includes language, attitude, and behavior.
- Reading and understanding the [Scouter Code of Conduct](#) prior to coming to camp.

Further information about Scouting Youth Protection and adult leadership guidelines can be found [here](#). Units should have a copy of the most current version of the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). Leaders should specifically review pages 1-5 of the Guide to Safe Scouting, including the Accommodations section on page 2.

All adult leaders in camp share responsibility to report Youth Protection and child abuse violations. **Any violations of Scouting Youth Protection must be immediately reported to the Camp Director.** Please reference the Scouting Youth Protection [website](#) for further inquiries about Youth Protection policy.

Leader Rotations

We understand that taking an entire week off to come to camp can be difficult for our leaders, and we welcome adults to switch out mid-week. However, it is important that your unit does not exceed the number of adult spots that are paid for. For example, a unit that pays for three adult leaders cannot have more than 3 adults spending the night or eating meals at one time. We do not prorate our fees for nightly stays. New leaders arriving must sign in and obtain their wristband from the Welcome Center when they arrive. The adult

that is leaving must also sign out at the Welcome Center. **Any adult staying overnight at camp must be registered with Scouting America and have completed Scouting Safeguarding Youth Training.**

EXPECTATIONS FOR SCOUT CONDUCT

The 12 points of the Scout Law guide our camps. All camper and staff conduct is judged by how it measures up against these guidelines. At camp, we cannot tolerate and will not permit activities that do not meet the criteria of the standards set forth in the Scout Law. We ask for your cooperation and understanding as adults in helping us maintain a high standard of moral and personal behavior.

Uniforms and Appropriate Attire

We ask Scouts to wear a complete Scouting Field Uniform to all retreat ceremonies, dinners, chapel services, and Sunday and Friday night campfires. High Knoll, Blue Ridge Mountaineer, and Voyageur Trek participants do not wear their Scout uniforms during the week.

During camp activities when a field uniform is not required, everyone in camp is expected to wear activity uniforms or other appropriate attire, regardless of age or gender. Appropriate attire is modest, and does not depict or promote political, explicit, or hateful content. Shirts and closed-toe shoes must be worn at all times at camp, with the exception of during waterfront activities and at the shower houses. Hats must be removed in the dining hall. Swimwear should be comfortable, functional, appropriate for aquatic camp activity. Additionally, swimwear must be clean, designed as swimwear, and secure enough to not shift or fall off while participating.

Scout Behavior

The Blue Ridge Scout Reservation is proud to serve individuals from many backgrounds and promote a camp environment of inclusion and respect. We will not tolerate any behavior from youth or adults that is found to discriminate against another camper or group, and such individuals will be removed from camp immediately at their own expense. All youth and adult participants are expected to follow the [Scouter Code of Conduct](#).

It is the primary responsibility of the unit leadership to set expectations for Scout conduct at camp and to carry out consequences for behavior that does not align with the Scout Oath and Law or violates Scouting Youth Protection and Youth-on-Youth Abuse policies. If such behavior is brought to the attention of camp leadership staff, we may remove such individuals from camp and report the behavior to the Scouting [Incident Reporting](#) tool.

Scouts should come to camp with the intent to participate in Scouting activities, work on individual advancement, and have fun. We may remove from camp any youth or adult who is found to be making any inappropriate and unwelcome advances on any other youth or adult of any gender or identity. Such advances can make the camp experience very unpleasant for involved individuals. We strongly recommend that unit leaders agree upon a cell phone and behavior policy with their Scouts that limits their distractions from the Scouting activities provided at camp. There is no cell service in camp and no WiFi services available to Scouts. We expect unit leaders to enforce this policy with their Scouts.

Older scouts sometimes feel that new scouts should be “initiated” into the unit with a physical activity or other embarrassing stunt. Unit leaders should be alert to this possibility and direct Scouts’ efforts into meaningful programs. Any behavior perceived as hazing or initiation is not permitted, is against Scouting’s Youth Protection standards, and may result in removal from camp.

EQUIPMENT DAMAGE

Normal usage and wear will result in some breakage of equipment; however, the cost of malicious damage or breakage will be charged to the unit and must be paid before leaving. The fees may be adjusted at the discretion of the Camp Director according to the severity of the damage.

- Damage to tent canvas: \$20/panel
- Uprights: \$12
- Ridge poles: \$15
- Rips and tears in tents or tarps: \$25/inch
- Fire extinguisher refill: \$50
- Cot replacement: \$120
- Adirondack mattress replacement: \$150
- Tarp replacement: \$400
- Tent replacement: \$700
- Adirondack replacement: \$3,000

Tent and Adirondack Damage

Our canvas wall tents and adirondacks are inspected weekly as part of the checkout process. All damage to tents when you arrive at camp must be reported to your campsite commissioner on the first day. Any new damage to tents caused by your unit will result in a fee. Please do not attempt to repair damaged tents yourself, the commissioner staff must be notified as soon as possible. Bug spray and repellent applied to canvas tents will cause the canvas to lose its water repellency.

RESTRICTIONS

The following are not allowed:

- Fireworks
- Alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs
- Flames in tents
- Pocket knives over four inches long or sheath knives other than those made in the Blue Ridge Mountaineer program
- Personal firearms
- Bicycles
- Pets, except registered service animals
- Use or possession of tobacco products by anyone under the age of 21 (Virginia state law). All camp buildings are smoke-free environments and smoking on the trail is discouraged.
- Possession or use of a vaporizer by youth
- Due to our invasive insect protocols, firewood may not be brought onto the property

Liquid Fuels

The use of liquid fuel stoves and lanterns in a campsite is permitted under the supervision of an adult leader. Under no circumstances are liquid fuels or lanterns allowed in tents. Bulk containers of fuel and unattached propane tanks must be stored in the fuel bin near the quartermaster. An approved spun aluminum fuel bottle is not considered to be a bulk container.

Contagious Disease

The Blue Ridge Mountains Council takes the safety and welfare of its staff and participants very seriously. As such, all units will be asked during the check-in process if anyone attending has experienced nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or fever-like symptoms during the week prior to camp starting. Please ask any Scouts or adults with symptoms like these to stay home so that we may protect the welfare of all those at camp. Our Health Officers may quarantine entire units, as well as campsites, if they suspect a risk of contagion.

VEHICLES, TRAILERS, & PARKING

In accordance with Scouting America policy, riding outside of a vehicle's enclosed passenger compartments is not permitted, meaning no rides on hoods, trunks, fenders, tailgates, or in the beds of trucks. Seat belts must be worn at all times in all vehicles. **The speed limit in camp is 5 mph and 15 mph on the roads leading to camp.**

Due to limited space in campsites, units may take one vehicle at a time to their campsite to unload gear upon arrival to camp, but at all other times, vehicles must be in their designated parking lot. Handicapped exceptions are allowed with a permit from the camp office. Trailer parking at your campsite is allowed, but not guaranteed. Plan accordingly when packing up your gear. Carpooling is encouraged and appreciated.

Golf carts and UTVs are prohibited on camp property except by trained staff members or if there is a medical or physical ability need. Please see our camp leadership staff to receive a vehicle pass if such exceptions apply.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

On your first day in camp, emergency procedures will be explained to troop leaders and scouts. In the event of an emergency, please notify a member of the camp staff immediately. Please do not attempt to deal with the emergency yourself, regardless of the situation. If the situation seems at all dangerous, the priority is to evacuate all Scouts and leaders from the area.

WILDLIFE SAFETY

Our Reservation is blessed with a wide range of biodiversity that includes deer, bats, raccoons, birds, skunks, turkey, snakes, coyotes, sasquatches, amphibians, and bears. It is wise to remember that these animals are the permanent residents of the backcountry while we are the visitors. Treat all animals with respect and observe from a distance. Do not follow, feed, tease, or handle wildlife. If you discover any animal that is behaving strangely, please notify camp staff immediately.

The intentional and unintentional feeding of all non-captive wildlife on reservation property is prohibited. Keep your campsite clean. Reservation staff, participants, and visitors are responsible for the safe storage of all food and trash at all times. Safe storage of food could be a trailer, bear-proof storage container, or 5-gallon buckets with screw-on lids. We do not recommend the use of bear bags in base camp. All trash should be removed from your campsite or secured each time the site is unattended. **Do not eat or drink in tents.**

In observance of their habitat and in an effort to avoid endangering these animals and our customers, we have a strict wildlife management policy. The Ranger reserves the right to fine any violators of our policy. Check with camp staff to determine if bears have been entering camp areas recently. If visits have occurred, then all smellables must also be stored in bear-proof containers. If you cook in your campsite, clean up immediately after the meal and pour your gray water (strained to remove food particles) into a nearby sink and rinse the sink with clean water. Please do not scatter your gray water near camp or dump it in a latrine.

Before leaving your campsite for the day:

- Have your Scouts police the site to pick up trash and dropped food.
- Make sure all food and smellables are secured appropriately.
- Leave tent flaps open if the weather permits.

Before going to bed at night:

- Make sure all food, trash, and any smellables are stored in a secure location, ideally more than 100 feet from tenting areas.
- If tables are dirty, wipe them down to reduce food smells.
- Make sure your Scouts keep their sleeping bags free of food smells by changing their clothes before going to bed and washing hands and faces.
- Please place all trash by your campsite sign for evening trash pickup. If your unit generates trash after that time, you are responsible for taking it to the secure dumpsters by the dining hall.

HEALTH & SAFETY AT CAMP

SPECIAL NEEDS ACCOMMODATIONS

The Blue Ridge Mountains Council will do everything in its power to accommodate participants with special needs, such as a physical handicap that limits mobility or the need for a CPAP machine. We ask that any unit with a participant needing special accommodations while at camp please fill out the [Special Accommodations Form](#) at least two weeks prior to camp attendance. If electricity is needed, please bring a 100' outdoor extension cord in addition to completing the form. Please fill out the form if there is any individual in your unit who will need use of a motorized golf cart for in-camp mobility. Use of a service animal is permitted but pets are not.

Submit any special dietary requests at least two weeks before camp using the [Dietary Needs Form](#). Our dining hall service provides a specialized dietician on site specifically to accommodate participants with these needs. They cannot prepare for your visit if the form is not completed before your arrival. Your unit will meet with dining hall staff during your Sunday tour, during which you can verify with the dietician that any special diets needed for your unit will be prepared. Please note that dislikes and texture aversions are not considered special dietary needs. In cases such as these, additional food is provided on the salad bars during meals and in the Trading Post snack bar. Units may also bring supplemental food as long as it is always stored in bear proof storage.

CAMPER SECURITY

Our camps are extremely concerned about the welfare and safety of Scouts. As such, early release requests, for any reason, will only be allowed if the following steps are completed. This information is taken from the Scouting America National Council's Health and Safety Guide.

1. Verification must be made to assure that the person requesting release is acting as the legal parent or guardian or under the direction of the legal parent or guardian. Verification may be done by the following:
 - a. Approval of the Scoutmaster.
 - b. Presentation of proper identification matched with the name listed as the legal parent or guardian on the Scout's medical form.
 - c. Contact via telephone with the legal parent or guardian. The telephone number used must be supplied by the Scoutmaster or obtained from the medical form.
 - d. Previous arrangements made with the Scoutmaster and Camp Director by the legal parent/guardian.
2. It is understood that any person who requests the early release of a Scout will abide by the policy set forth above and complete the [Early Release Form](#) prior to the release of the Scout.
3. It is understood that a Scout will never be released to another youth under 18 years of age without verified permission from the legal parent or guardian.

For everyone's safety, we require parents, leaders, Scouts, and staff to sign in and out at the Welcome Center when entering and leaving camp during the week. If there are concerns about a Scout's safety, please promptly discuss the situation with our camp leadership staff.

The buddy system must be followed at all times in all locations at Blue Ridge Scout Reservation. No person, Scout or adult, should be alone while walking the trails or in a campsite. Adult leaders are expected to enforce the buddy system with their Scouts.

MEDICAL SERVICES

The camp's Health Lodge is staffed 24 hours each day by qualified medical personnel. For insurance and safety reasons, all accidents and illnesses—no matter how minor—must be reported to and recorded by the Health Lodge. Arrangements have been made with the local rescue squads and hospitals to handle any medical emergencies. National standards require that any person staying overnight have a valid medical form on file with the Health Lodge. Late arrivals should report to the office and then to the Health Lodge.

Every participant must submit a [Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record](#) upon arrival at camp. **A physician's signature is required.** Leaders should provide a copy of the newest version of the medical form to each youth and adult planning to come to camp as soon as possible so that they can get their physicals completed and forms filled out properly. This record is provided as a fillable PDF, and members are encouraged to fill it out on their computer and print the record, rather than filling it out by hand, to improve the readability and accuracy of medical information. Though this document can be saved and emailed, please

be cognizant of the private information saved within the record. Please understand that the Scouting Annual Health and Medical Record is the only medical form recognized by Scouting. Sport, military, or other medical records may not be substituted.

Scouting activities can be physically and mentally demanding. Listed below are some risk factors that can become issues during outdoor adventure. Please exercise caution and restraint.

- Excessive body weight
- Cardiac or cardiovascular disease
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Diabetes mellitus
- Seizures
- Asthma
- Sleep apnea
- Allergies or anaphylaxis
- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Psychological/emotional difficulties

Prescription Medications

The Blue Ridge Mountains Council requires that all prescription and over the counter medications be stored under lock, except when in the controlled presence of health care staff or other adult leaders responsible for the administration and/or dispensing of medications. **Please do not bring over the counter medications** such as Tylenol or cough syrup to camp. The Health Lodge stocks these medications and will dispense based on the patient's signs and symptoms. Emergency medications such as inhalers, epi pens, and nitro should be maintained on the patient's person. Refrigerated medications may be stored at the health lodge or in the campsite if secured under lock and key. All medication should be in a container issued by a pharmacist with the medication name and strength, the dose, and dose frequency clearly marked on the container.

Each unit must make a decision to either maintain control of its medications or turn them over to our Health Officers for administration. If your unit chooses to maintain control of its medications, one adult leader must be designated as the unit health officer and sign the [Unit Health Officer Waiver](#).

All participants taking medications must fill out the [Prescription Medication Dosing Form](#) prior to arrival at camp. We recommend that the unit health officer perform this task so that they are familiar with the medications. Please use one form for each participant and list the medication, dosage, and dosage schedule shown on the prescription.

Each unit should be prepared to show these completed forms at check-in to the camp Health Officer, and then keep them updated throughout your unit's week at camp as medications are used. We will ask that you leave a copy of these completed forms at camp when you depart. We will maintain them in the permanent camp medical files.

CAMP ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

TRANSPORTATION

Intercamp Transportation

Our staff will provide transportation at 4:00 PM for Scouts needing to travel between Powhatan and Ottari during Sunday check-in, if needed. If you are able to provide transportation between camps, you may do so after you check in. It takes about 30 minutes to travel between Camp Powhatan and Camp Ottari.

Early Arrival

Units traveling long distances who choose to arrive on Saturday night must fill out the [Early Arrival Form](#) and submit it by **May 1, 2026**, so that a staff member can meet your group and show you to your campsite for the evening. Showers are available for your use; however, no program or food is available, and troops should not enter the waterfront. If your group brings food for cooking, ensure you have bear-proof storage containers. Camp opens for check-in on Sunday at 1:00 p.m., with meal service starting at dinner that evening. Our staff can provide directions to local grocery stores, restaurants, and movie theaters.

Late Arrival

Units arriving late must also notify the camp in advance by filling out the [Late Arrival Form](#) by **May 1, 2026**. Please note that late arrivals will result in missed program time. Upon late arrival, your unit may have to wait for staff to become available to assist with check-in. Late units will not be accommodated to the detriment of the camp program.

Charter Buses

Units planning to travel on charter buses must complete the [Charter Bus Form](#) by **May 1, 2026**. Charter buses are too large for our camp roads and bridges, so please inform our staff of your estimated time of arrival and number of participants on the bus. Camp management will arrange for your unit's transportation into camp from the entrance.

End of Week Transportation

There is a Friday afternoon shuttle from Blue Ridge Mountaineer at Camp Ottari to Camp Powhatan. Extra housing with the unit cannot be guaranteed; provisional Scouts may share a campsite for the night. Units with multiple provisional Scouts may be asked to provide an adult leader for supervision Friday night if Scouts cannot be accommodated with their unit's site.

Shuttles will NOT run Saturday morning to pick up High Knoll participants. Scouts will leave their program site at predetermined times early Saturday mornings and meet up with their unit by 9:00 AM at Camp Ottari. Arrangements can be made for earlier departure times with the Camp Director.

NEARBY SERVICES

The towns of Pulaski, Dublin, Radford, and Christiansburg along Interstate 81 are closest to the Blue Ridge Scout Reservation. Pulaski and Dublin are close to Camp Powhatan, while Radford and Christiansburg are close to Camp Ottari. These towns have hotels, religious services, shopping, medical services, and points of cultural interest. Most services are a 30- to 45-minute drive from camp.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Please use discretion in choosing which items to bring to camp, as they may get lost or damaged. We suggest that you leave valuable items at home. Label all personal items with the Scout's name and unit number.

Unit Equipment

- Bear-proof storage for food and smellables
- Troop flag
- American flag
- First aid kits
- Clothing marker pens
- Extra tarps
- Out-of-council insurance information
- Merit badge books
- Rope and twine

Personal Items

- Medical Form parts A, B, & C completed
- Medications
- Sleeping bag with liner or sheet
- Complete Field Uniform
- Activity Uniforms
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Warm jacket and/or sweatshirts
- Hats
- Underwear
- Swimsuit(s)
- Long pants
- Long sleeve shirts
- Plenty of socks
- Tennis shoes
- Hiking boots
- Sandals or shower shoes
- Towels and washcloths
- Toiletries: soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, shampoo, etc.
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Water bottles
- Spending money: suggested \$100
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Plastic coat hanger for hanging uniform
- Watch
- Handkerchief
- Pocket knife
- Laundry bag
- Hand sanitizer
- Scout Handbook
- Notebook and writing items

Optional Unit Equipment

- Emergency numbers for all parents/guardians
- Cash box
- The Scoutmaster Handbook
- Alarm clock
- Matches
- Knot ropes
- Water coolers
- Lantern
- Sewing kit
- Duct tape (not for use on tents)
- Religious text
- Props for favorite stunts and skits
- Hand tools and gloves for projects

LOST & FOUND PROPERTY

Prior to coming to camp, Scouts should be encouraged to clearly mark all personal items with their name and unit number. We recommend that one adult leader in each troop serve as a banker for the Scouts. This prevents the loss of large amounts of money and allows leaders to help the Scouts pace their spending for the week.

A lost and found box is located in the Trading Post at Camp Powhatan and in the Welcome Center at Camp Ottari. More valuable lost and found items may be stored in the Camp Powhatan Welcome Center in a locked cabinet. All unclaimed items will go to the Blue Ridge Mountains Council office and be held there until September 1, after which they will be donated or disposed of.

SUNDAY CHECK-IN PROCEDURE

If your entire unit is ONLY participating in High Knoll Trail Camp and/or Blue Ridge Mountaineer, you may check in directly at Camp Ottari without stopping at Camp Powhatan. These units can report to the Camp Ottari Welcome Center for medical checks and program-specific check-in instructions.

The Camp Powhatan check-in process is open on Sunday from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Units should arrive during the designated time unless an early or late arrival form has been submitted. Please understand that additional participants cannot be added at check-in on Sunday.

Required Forms to Bring

At Camp Powhatan, your unit will be assigned a staff tour guide at the Handicraft shelter when you arrive. You will then send an adult leader with the following information to the check-in area:

- 2 copies of program rosters for all Scouts and adults. **Be sure to bring rosters for all programs** (Brownsea Island, New River Adventure, Blue Ridge Mountaineer, High Knoll Trail Camp, etc.)
- Unit My.Scouting roster to verify that all participants are registered members of Scouting America
- Proof of Accident & Sickness Insurance (out of council units only: request proof of Accident & Sickness from your Council Service Center accounting department)
- Check or cash to pay any outstanding unit balances
- Medical Forms in a separate folder to accompany the rest of the unit on the camp tour
- New River Adventure required forms that may include the [NRA parental waiver](#), [ATV waiver](#), [whitewater rafting waiver](#), and [horseback riding waiver](#), [Virginia Boating Safety Course](#) Card

At check-in, you will receive our camp “Blue Book” containing important forms and schedules for you to reference and use throughout the week. Check-in is also a great opportunity to meet our camp leadership and ask any remaining questions you may have concerning your week at camp.

Camp Tour

If you are based at Camp Powhatan, your camp tour begins when your unit arrives on Sunday. Your unit will first be taken to your campsite where you will be given a short amount of time to unload gear (one car at a

time is allowed in the campsite). Then your assigned guide will take your unit to each program area to show the Scouts the layout of the camp and introduce them to our camp environment.

As part of the tour, your unit will visit the Dining Hall to learn about our basic Dining Hall procedures. This is also the best time to meet with the Dining Hall staff about any allergies or dietary needs (forms for which should be filled out at least two weeks prior to arrival).

Your unit will complete health checks during the tour, in which our medical staff will review each participant's Medical Form and ask questions to assess individual health. Units are encouraged to organize their medical forms alphabetically to make this process easier.

For water-related activities designated with the swim classification "swimmer," participants must meet this qualification in Lake Powhatan due to the colder water temperatures that may influence individual swimming abilities. All programs that have water-related activities will have swim checks during the Sunday check-in at base camp.

Check the program-specific sections of this guide for more specific check-in information for [High Knoll Trail Camp](#), [Blue Ridge Mountaineer](#), [Voyageur Trek](#), [New River Adventure](#), and [Scuba](#).

SATURDAY CHECK-OUT PROCEDURE

If you are staying at Camp Powhatan, have your Scouts pack up all of their gear on Friday night, except the items they will need Saturday morning. If your unit is leaving before 6:00 AM on Saturday, please discuss a time for your checkout inspection with the office staff in the camp's Welcome Center before noon on Friday. Following the Friday night campfire, each unit should send adult representatives to "Whine and Cheese" at the Dining Hall to pick up your merit badge completion records, medical forms, and participant patches. Area Directors will be in the dining hall to answer any questions and correct any potential errors regarding your Scout's advancement. Upon returning home, leaders may print blue cards from Black Pug.

The check-out process starts at 6:00 AM on Saturday. Checkout commissioners will be available near your campsite location (typically out on the road between sites). Send representatives to the nearest checkout commissioner any time after 6:00 AM for campsite inspection. The campsite should be policed for trash, and the shower/toilet facilities used by your unit should be checked for cleanliness before leaving. Set trash bags by your campsite sign for pickup.

Return all equipment to the Quartermaster. Your Blue Book should be returned to the Welcome Center before you leave to avoid fees. A continental breakfast is served open-style from 7:00 to 8:30 AM in the Dining Hall.

Check the program-specific sections of this guide for more specific check-out information for High Knoll Trail Camp, Blue Ridge Mountaineer, Voyageur Trek, New River Adventure, and Scuba.

UNIT T-SHIRTS

All units are invited to order t-shirts through our online portal (coming in spring 2026!) to show off their Scout spirit and unit pride. Units can choose from a selection of colors and are encouraged to coordinate colors

within their unit. Shirts will be distributed when you arrive at camp if the order was placed on time. Shirts will be ready two weeks after order placement.

CAMPSITE ACCOMMODATIONS

Participants in Camp Powhatan, New River Adventure, and Scuba will stay in Camp Powhatan campsites, listed in the table below. Our canvas wall tents can house two individuals at a time, although your unit may need more tents to abide by Scouting Safeguarding Youth policies. Some of our campsites have adirondack shelters, which can hold eight individuals at a time. The adirondacks often work well for units with a greater number of youth or adults. Please note that **Scoutmasters and adult leaders will be expected to share tent space** in most cases to ensure enough space for all campers, while abiding by Scouting policy.

Participants in Blue Ridge Mountaineer, High Knoll, and Voyageur Trek will be provided with campsite accommodations at Camp Ottari and/or at the backcountry outposts. High Knoll and Voyageur Trek participants must bring their own backpacking tents.

If your unit would prefer to request a certain campsite or certain adirondack shelters during your time at camp, you will have the opportunity to make that note during the registration process on Black Pug. We typically do not finalize weekly campsite assignments until the week before summer camp begins. The Blue Ridge Mountains Council will do our best to honor your request but cannot guarantee your site preference.

We also offer primitive campsites that have tent platforms and access to water and restroom facilities, but will not have canvas tents installed. If your unit would like to bring their own personal tents to use at camp, you may request any of these campsites.

If any individual in your unit has any further accommodation requests, these can be made with the [Special Accommodations Form](#). See below for campsites with access to power. If someone in your unit will require access to power, they should bring an extension cord of at least 100 feet.

CAMP POWHATAN CAMPSITES	NUMBER OF TENTS	NUMBER OF ADIRONDACKS	TOTAL CAMPER CAPACITY	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Rockridge	56		112	Tent rings of 8, 9, 11, 13, 15 (access to power ONLY in 15)
Tipi	29	5	98	Includes access to power
Cherokee	30	2	76	Includes access to power
Chopto A	18		36	Includes access to power
Chopto B	21		42	
Hilltop	22		44	
Shawnee	15		30	

Chanco	6		12	
Crow's Nest	14		28	
Bluff City	12		24	Includes access to power
Trail's End	26		52	
Little Max A	21		42	
Little Max B	14		28	
Little Max C	7		14	
Big Max	16		32	
Half Max	7		14	Includes access to power
Burma		3	24	Includes access to power
Tawneys		4	32	Includes access to power
Kaymoor	1	2	18	Includes access to power
Narrows		4	32	Includes access to power
Greyhound		5	40	Includes access to power

PARENTS & VISITORS

CAMP MAILING ADDRESSES

[Scout Name, Unit Number]

Camp Powhatan

2600 Max Creek Road, Hiwassee, Virginia 24347

[Scout Name, Unit Number]

Camp Ottari

2881 Simpkinstown Road, Hiwassee, Virginia 24347

Always include a return address on your package. For express mail, please do not check the box for signature, as this will delay delivery by at least one day. In order to save postage and ensure that your Scout receives their letter or package, consider sending the week's mail with unit leaders to ensure timely distribution. Just label Day 1, Day 2, etc.

CELL PHONES & INTERNET

Cell service is limited at both Camp Powhatan and Camp Ottari. WiFi is available for adult leaders at most camps, but the internet can be unpredictable depending on weather or other technical issues. WiFi is strictly NOT to be used by Scouts at camp.

VISITING CAMP

We ask that guests only visit during the following hours:

- Sunday 1:30-5:00 PM
- Friday 5:30 PM (for dinner and campfire)
- Saturday 9:00-11:00 AM

Visitors must immediately check in at the Welcome Center. Visitors are welcome to eat camp meals and can purchase meal wristbands at the Welcome Center. Large groups of 8 or more must call in a reservation to the camp office at least 2 days in advance. Picnic areas are available and their use is encouraged. Please do not bring family pets.

PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

At the Blue Ridge Scout Reservation, adventure and discovery await every Scout! With seven diverse and thrilling programs designed to ignite the adventurous spirit in Scouts of all ages and ranks, there's something here for everyone. Whether your Scouts are seasoned adventurers or just starting their Scouting journey, they'll find a program that matches their interests and challenges them in new ways.

Each Scout will dive deep into their chosen adventure for the entire week, creating memories and mastering skills they'll carry for a lifetime. Don't worry about choosing just one program for your whole unit - Scouts can pursue unique adventures with the appropriate supervision. We're excited to welcome your unit to a summer full of exploration, growth, and unforgettable experiences!

CAMP POWHATAN

Camp Powhatan is your gateway to adventure, offering something for Scouts of all ages! Dive into our action-packed merit badge program, where first-year Scouts can embark on the legendary Brownsea Island adventure while older Scouts soar to new heights in our prestigious Eagle's Nest. The excitement doesn't stop there - our evenings are filled with thrilling activities, and our dynamic program areas guarantee unforgettable experiences. Get ready to create lifelong memories and conquer new challenges at Camp Powhatan!



LEADERS' MEETINGS

There will be an opening leaders' meeting on Sunday after dinner (around 7:15 PM) in the Camp Powhatan OA Shelter. Following that, there will be daily leaders' meetings at 8:30 AM in the OA Shelter. These meetings are an important source of information and a time to ask questions of our area directors and administration. Please send at least one representative from your unit to each meeting. Senior Patrol Leaders are welcome to attend.

OPENING CAMPFIRE

There will be an opening campfire on Sunday evening to get everyone started for the week. Units should line up on the Parade Field at 8:00 PM on Sunday.

FOOD SERVICE

Our experienced dining hall staff works hard to provide well-balanced meals for all in a timely manner while also reducing food waste. Report any dietary restrictions before arrival using the Dietary Needs Form. Depending on camp attendance, Camp Powhatan typically has two meal shifts, served family-style for breakfast and dinner, and a consolidated, open-style lunch for the entire camp. Your unit will receive a meal schedule when you arrive. Flag ceremonies occur prior to breakfast and dinner services and serve as a chance

for units to hear important program announcements. Units are asked to wear Field Uniforms to dinner. Activity Uniforms are recommended for breakfast and lunch.

Scouts are encouraged to be mindful of how they dispose of their waste at camp, and our staff would be happy to assist as necessary in the process.

TRADING POST

The Camp Powhatan Trading Post will be open at convenient hours from Sunday afternoon through Saturday morning. Our Trading Post carries camp t-shirts, patches, souvenirs, merit badge pamphlets, craft supply materials, soft drinks, candy, and a wide selection of Scouting outdoor supplies. A camp patch will be given to each Scout and adult leader registered in camp, but additional camp patches will be on sale in the Trading Post. Our Snack Bar serves everything a hungry Scout could want, from slushies and ice cream to nachos and pizza.

It is recommended that Scouts bring a minimum of \$100 to spend in the Trading Post and Snack Bar throughout the week. With our updated Square payment system, we accept cash, checks, all major credit and debit cards, Apple Pay, and Google Pay.

RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL SERVICES

We provide an interfaith religious service in the Camp Powhatan Chapel on Thursday evening each week that your unit is invited to attend. Our resident camp Chaplain is available for spiritual guidance and mental first aid counseling. Please alert our staff if any situation arises with which we may be able to assist.

CAMP POWHATAN GENERAL DAILY SCHEDULE (tentative)

7:00 AM	First breakfast
7:45 AM	Flag ceremony, second breakfast
8:30 AM	Leader's meeting
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Morning merit badge classes
9:15 AM	Brownsea Island meets in the Chapel
12:00 PM - 1:45 PM	Lunch & siesta
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Afternoon merit badge classes
5:15 PM	First dinner
6:00 PM	Flag ceremony, second dinner
7:30 PM	Evening programs begin

8:00 PM	Trash run
11:00 PM	All quiet in camp

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Cowboy Action Shooting is an optional evening activity that allows scouts and adults ages 14 and up to shoot different types of guns, including a revolver, double-barreled shotgun, and a lever-action rifle at targets on a western-themed range. The program requires a signed parent [permission form](#) (please prepare ahead of time) and an additional \$5 fee. Participants will sign up and pay for the program at camp.

Learn to Swim and Mile Swim are skill certifications, not merit badges. Open Swim, available from 4:00 - 5:00 PM daily, does not count toward a badge or certification.

We offer several evening merit badges throughout the week, most likely to include Climbing, Fingerprinting, Music, Photography, and Mammal Study. To ensure accurate attendance records, we will not offer sign-up online ahead of time for these badges, but the instructor will instead take attendance in person. Extra adult supervision is encouraged at these badges to help manage the expected larger class sizes.

Your troop is invited to work towards a Houndstooth Award by participating in campwide events, maintaining an orderly campsite, and going above and beyond. Full requirements for the Houndstooth Award can be found [here](#).

We are also excited to offer troops the opportunity to earn their Scouting Heritage Award at camp by displaying a creative campsite exhibit and electing a troop historian. Full requirements for the Scouting Heritage Award can be found [here](#).

ADULT LEADER PROGRAMS

Our adult leaders are invited to complete the Scoutmaster Merit Badge, which has a variety of requirements (including take a nap!) that can be completed during your time at camp. View the full requirements [here](#). Some fun activities our staff look forward to offering to adult leaders include: an off-site golf outing, scoutmaster volleyball, hillbilly golf, scoutmaster bellyflop, and the Great Scoutmaster Cookoff.

We also offer a broad range of Scouting training courses exclusively to adult leaders, including Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills, Climb on Safely, Leave no Trace, Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat, Wilderness First Aid, and CPR/First Aid. Additional fees include: \$60 for Wilderness First Aid, \$40 for CPR/First Aid, and \$25 for Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills (these fees are all subject to change). Registration and payment for these courses will take place in-person at camp on the day of your arrival.

We are excited to offer a Reservation Tour once a week for adult leaders to take a guided vehicle tour of our 14,000 acre camp property. This tour is a good opportunity for adults to see our many different camp programs in action and start thinking about what programs their Scouts may want to do next summer!

Adult leaders are invited to join us on Tuesday nights for an exclusive steak dinner served with appreciation for all that unit leaders do to serve their Scouting youth. Use this as an opportunity to voice your thoughts to camp and council staff about camp and program and to socialize with other unit leaders.

Adult leaders with any relevant certifications or skills, such as lifeguards or range officers, are invited to assist our camp staff throughout your week at camp. Contact us to find out what opportunities may be available for your week of summer camp.

BROWNSEA ISLAND

Brownsea Island is an all-day, all-week program focused on imparting Scouting's essential skills and methods onto your newest Scouts and helping them to earn requirements for the ranks of Scout through First Class. Because of the program's focus, Scouts in Brownsea Island do not have time to earn merit badges through regular classes. BSI scouts will have an opportunity to take evening badges during the week.

Brownsea Island program goals:

- To prepare new Scouts to be an active participant in the activities of their troop
- To supplement, not replace, the troop's advancement program
- To give Scouts the opportunity to practice Scout skills that require practice and repeat action such as knots, tool usage, orienteering, and first aid
- To give Scouts a sense of accomplishment
- To have fun in a learn-by-doing environment

Brownsea Island (BSI) is an invaluable program to many troops, offering access to skills and requirements that may be difficult for the Scouts to achieve through regular Scout meetings and outings. BSI is a great introduction to Scouting and all of its facets, and it can help encourage new Scouts to continue on their path to Eagle. Brownsea Island is meant specifically for NEW Scouts (not necessarily first-year campers). The program is aimed towards those who recently bridged in February or joined at the end of the school year.

Here is exactly what you can expect from our Brownsea Island program:

- An introduction to the patrol method through model troop meetings for daily activities
- Games and activities to keep the Scouts engaged
- Rank requirements that are difficult for the home troop to accomplish, such as the 1-mile orienteering course, 5-mile hike, and swim tests

MERIT BADGE PROGRAM

Camp Powhatan provides numerous classes each week as part of its base camp program. Units will sign their Scouts up for badges through Black Pug, our online registration system. Changes to a Scout's schedule can be made online up to one week before you arrive at camp and with the Program Director (or designee) at camp. Scouts must take both hours of a two-hour class sequentially and may not divide up those hours. Two-hour classes include Environmental Science, Personal Fitness, Shotgun, Rifle, and Lifesaving.

Our staff are excited to offer several new merit badges at Powhatan in 2026! We are now offering Cooking, Personal Fitness, Athletics, American Indian Culture, Bird Study, Signs & Signals, Search & Rescue, and Rowing.

All badges will be taught based on the requirements found in the most recent edition of the Scouting America requirement book. Please check to make sure your merit badge books contain the same requirements. It is the responsibility of each Scout to choose and prepare for each merit badge in advance of their week at camp. If a Scout wishes to complete the merit badge at camp, then that Scout must provide evidence of completing the listed prerequisites (i.e. examples of their work or a note from their Scoutmaster). Scouts will receive all necessary materials (such as basket kits) on the first day of class. To ensure quality and safe instruction, class sizes are limited according to the number of instructors, equipment, and other factors.

MERIT BADGE	PRE-REQUISITES	MATERIAL FEE
HANDICRAFT		
Art // Animation		\$15
Basketry		\$15
Chess		
Game Design		
Leatherwork		\$15
Model Design & Building		
Wood Carving		\$25
American Indian Culture		
SCOUTCRAFT		
Backpacking		
Electronics // Electricity		
Orienteering // Geocaching		
Pioneering		
Robotics		\$20
Signs & Signals // Search & Rescue		
Wilderness Survival		
Fish & Wildlife Management // Fishing		\$10
Public Health		
NATURE		

Chemistry	
Engineering	
Environmental Science (2-hr block)	
Forestry // Soil & Water Conservation	
Geology	
Nature // Weather	
Reptile & Amphibian Study	
Space Exploration // Astronomy	\$15
Bird Study	
RANGE & TARGET ACTIVITIES	
Archery	\$10
Rifle Shooting (2-hr block)	
Shotgun Shooting (2-hr block)	Recommend 13+
EAGLE'S NEST	
Camping	
Citizenship in the Nation	
Citizenship in the World	
Communication	
Cooking (2-hr block)	\$10
Emergency Preparedness	
First Aid	
Personal Fitness // Athletics (2-hr block)	
Public Health	
AQUATICS	
Canoeing	Recommend 13+
Kayaking	
Lifesaving (2-hr block)	
Swimming	
Rowing	

EVENING BADGES	
Fingerprinting	
Mammal Study	
Photography	
American Heritage	

MERIT BADGE SCHEDULE						
Time	Nature	Handicraft	Scoutcraft	Range & Target	Eagle's Nest	Waterfront
9:00 AM	Env. Science (9-11)	Art / Animation	Fishing / Fish & Wildlife	Archery	Camping	Canoeing
	Nature / Weather	Amer. Indian Culture	Pioneering (9-11)	Rifle (9-11)	Cit. in World	Swimming
	Space Ex / Astronomy	Leatherwork	Wilderness Survival	Shotgun (9-11)	Communication	Lifesaving (9-11)
	Engineering	Woodcarving	Public Health		E. Prep	
		Game Design			First Aid	
10:00 AM	Env. Science (cont.)	Basketry	Fishing / Fish & Wildlife	Archery	Camping	Canoeing
	Reptile & Amphibian	Chess	Pioneering (cont.)	Rifle (cont.)	Cit. in Nation	Swimming
	Space Ex / Astronomy	Leatherwork	Geocaching/Orienteering	Shotgun (cont.)	Cooking (10-12)	Lifesaving (cont.)
	Bird Study	Woodcarving	Signs & Signals / Search & Rescue		First Aid	Kayaking
					Per. Fitness/Athletics (10-12)	
11:00 AM	Forestry / Soil & Water	Art / Animation	Fishing / Fish & Wildlife	Archery	Cit. in Nation	Canoeing
	Geology	Chess	Geocaching/Orienteering	Rifle (11-3:30)	Communication	Kayaking
	Nature / Weather	Leatherwork	Backpacking	Shotgun (11-3:30)	Cooking (cont.)	Learn to Swim
	Bird Study	Woodcarving			Per. Fitness/Athletics (cont.)	Swimming
		Model Design				
12:00 - 2:00 PM	Lunch & Siesta *No Afternoon Classes on Friday*					
2:00 PM	Env. Science (2-4:50)	Art / Animation	Fishing / Fish & Wildlife	Archery	Camping	Kayaking
	Space Ex / Astronomy	Amer. Indian Culture	Geocaching/Orienteering	Rifle (cont.)	Cooking (2-4:50)	Lifesaving (2-4:50)
	Reptile & Amphibian	Leatherwork	Robotics	Shotgun (cont.)	E. Prep	Swimming
	Chemistry	Woodcarving			Per. Fitness/Athletics (2-4:50)	Rowing
		Model Design				
3:30 PM	Env. Science (cont.)	Basketry	Geocaching/Orienteering	Archery	Cooking (cont.)	Kayaking
	Geology	Chess	Electronics / Electricity		Cit. in World	Lifesaving (cont.)
	Nature / Weather	Leatherwork	Wilderness Survival		First Aid	Swimming
	Forestry / Soil & Water	Woodcarving	Signs & Signals / Search & Rescue		E. Prep	Canoeing
		Game Design			Per. Fitness/Athletics (cont.)	

Program Area	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Brownsea Island	Stave Decorating	Cracker Barrel		BSI Games
Eagle's Nest	Eagle Roundtable	Fingerprinting	American Heritage	
Handicraft	Photography	Tie-Dye	Chess Tournament	Open Handicraft
Nature	Nature Show	Frog Hike	Nature Meet & Greet	Mammal Study
Scoutcraft	Totin' Chip	Scout Trivia	Wilderness Survival	Cardboard Boat Race
Range & Target	Open Ranges	Cowboy Action		Open Ranges
Waterfront	Open Swim		Open Swim	Sharks & Minnows
Misc.			Commissioner Campfire / Mountaineer Program Demos	OA Cracker Barrel

NEW RIVER ADVENTURE

For the ultimate thrill-seeker, New River Adventure delivers a week of non-stop excitement! Brace yourself for a rollercoaster of challenges and fun, where teamwork, leadership, and confidence soar through our nationally accredited COPE course. But that's just the beginning - experience adrenaline-packed high adventure with activities like whitewater rafting and rock climbing. If you're ready to push your limits and make unforgettable memories, New River Adventure is your gateway to the ride of a lifetime!



BEFORE CAMP

In addition to the pre-camp requirements for base camp participants, New River Adventure participants must do the following:

- Select your optional daily programs through Black Pug beginning March 1 (weeks 1 & 2) or March 15 (weeks 3-5)
- Participants under 18 years old: complete and bring the [Parental Waiver](#) to camp
- ATV participants: complete and bring the [ATV Waiver](#) to camp
- Whitewater rafting participants: complete and bring the [Rafting Waiver](#) to camp
- Horseback riding participants: complete and bring the [Horseback Riding Waiver](#) to camp
- Claytor Lake participants: [Virginia Boating Safety Course](#) card

ONLINE REGISTRATION

You will use our Black Pug registration system to select your optional programs, starting March 1 (weeks 1 & 2) or March 15 (weeks 3-5). Some activities have age restrictions, class size limits, and additional fees. Activities will only be offered certain days of the week, so please plan schedules accordingly. The final 2026 New River Adventure daily program schedule will be released after December 31, 2026. Most, but not all, [LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 20, 2026](#)

activities are offered multiple times per week. We ask that any units who register for New River Adventure select their daily programs as a group to prevent individuals being left out and to make our registration process smoother.

RESTRICTIONS & LEADERSHIP

Participants must be at least 13 years old and have completed 8th grade, or be 14 years old, unless specified otherwise for certain programs. All aquatic activities require that participants meet the “swimmer” classification during the Scouting swim check at Lake Powhatan. If a Scout cannot pass “swimmer” proficiency, they will have the opportunity to work with our New River Adventure staff to change planned daily activities to suit their schedule.

Units with Scouts in New River Adventure will need to provide adult leaders for activities and travel. Units sending female youth must also provide a female adult leader aged 21 or older. Adults who attend the program can have the same experiences as the youth, but are not required to participate in all activities. There are two options for adult registration for New River Adventure on Black Pug: participating adult and supporting adult. Participating adults will have the option to register for and fully participate in programs alongside the youth participants. Supporting adults do not have the option to register for or participate in the NRA programs, and are expected to assist our staff in driving camp vehicles, transporting gear, and supervising program participants.

CHECK-IN & WEEKLY SCHEDULE

New River Adventure participants will stay in a campsite at Camp Powhatan, even if your entire unit is registered for New River Adventure, and will go through the Camp Powhatan check-in process outlined above.

All of the activities will start immediately after breakfast, so be prepared and bring all the items necessary for that day’s activities. Participants will be combined into groups of 10-20 Scouts and adult leaders based on the optional day choice. When possible, (depending on size) we will group your unit together. We provide packaged lunches for participants leaving base camp for daily activities. It is important that any NRA Scouts with dietary restrictions fill out the [Dietary Needs Form](#) before coming to camp so our dining staff can pack their meals appropriately. In the evenings, you are free to participate in Camp Powhatan evening events and badges alongside base camp Scouts.

ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Low COPE	X				
High COPE		X			
Caving			X	X	X
ATV			X	X	X
Natural Rock Climbing			X		

Whitewater Rafting	X	X	
Horseback Riding		X	X
Whitewater Canoeing	X		X
Claytor Lake Aquatics		X	X

MERIT BADGES

Whitewater canoeing participants will have the opportunity to complete parts of the Canoeing and Whitewater merit badges but should not expect to complete all of the requirements of either merit badge. Be sure to communicate with our NRA staff if your scout would like to complete any requirements for these badges. Unlike merit badge camp, the general focus of the New River Adventure program is on providing a safe environment for our older Scouts to have a thrilling and exciting camp experience in the natural wonders of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

DAILY PROGRAMS

These program options are subject to change for the 2026 season due to staffing limitations and evolving program availability. We will make every effort to inform all units of changes in availability as soon as possible.

ACTIVITY	COST	LIMITATIONS & RESTRICTIONS
Low COPE	N/A	N/A
High COPE	N/A	Recommended 300 pound weight limit
Caving	\$50	Limit of 8 participants/day
Whitewater Canoeing	\$50	Pass Lake Powhatan Swim Test, Canoeing badge recommended
Horseback Riding	\$50	Waiver
All Terrain Vehicles	\$75	Limit of 6 participants/day, must be at least 16 years old, waiver
Natural Rock Climbing	\$75	Limit of 12 participants/day, must also register for rafting
Whitewater Rafting	\$125	Pass Lake Powhatan Swim Test, waiver
Claytor Lake Aquatics	\$100	Limit of 12 participants/day, pass Lake Powhatan Swim Test, boaters safety course

Every New River Adventure participant will pay a flat fee of \$270, which includes basic registration for the program, one day of Low COPE, and one day of high COPE. To fill a Scout's schedule Wednesday through Friday, they will choose from the activity options listed here. Each activity has an associated fee that is added

to the Scout's flat fee. Scouts are not required to fill every day of their schedule with New River Adventure activities if they would prefer to instead spend a day or two relaxing at camp.

Low COPE

Low COPE involves group development exercises below 5 feet off the ground that challenge your unit's ability to problem solve situations with synchronized teamwork in a new environment. Low COPE is a required Monday activity for all New River Adventure participants as it allows our staff to assess participant strengths and abilities before moving onto more challenging activities the rest of the week. If groups or individuals are demonstrating an inability to safely participate in high adventure programs, participants may be asked to find a different program offering for the remainder of the week. Low COPE is an included experience, so there are no additional costs or restrictions.

Recommended equipment: closed-toe shoes, sunscreen, sturdy pants or shorts, and a water bottle.

High COPE

High COPE is designed to provide a greater challenge for Scouts who have succeeded with low COPE. Participants will have the opportunity to rock climb and rappel the four-story tower and attempt 6-8 high ropes course elements at the Camp Powhatan COPE & Climbing Center. Participants will spend the morning learning to belay and climb on the front and back of the tower, and the afternoon on the high ropes course. High COPE is not recommended for participants over 300 pounds due to the climbing and rope belay systems.

Recommended equipment: closed-toe shoes, sunscreen, sturdy long pants, water bottle, daypack, rain gear, and gloves.

Caving

A day of caving costs \$50 to add to your schedule. For safety reasons and to maintain a low impact on the caves, there is a limit of 8 participants per day. Our experienced staff will provide all necessary equipment, gear, and training.

Caving groups will travel to a private cave near camp in Giles County, Virginia in the morning with our staff and will return to Camp Powhatan the same afternoon. Be prepared to get muddy as you experience total darkness, learn about cave formations, and practice low-impact caving techniques.

Recommended equipment: long pants, gloves, long sleeve shirt, closed-toe shoes, change of clothes and shoes, and a water bottle. Cave mud will permanently stain clothing.

Whitewater Canoeing

A day of whitewater canoeing costs \$50 to add to your schedule. This activity requires Scouts to complete the Scouting Swim Check with Swimmer proficiency at Camp Powhatan prior to participating. Canoeing merit badge is recommended prior to participating in this program.

Participants will spend the day whitewater canoeing a section of the New River in Southwest Virginia guided by our trained staff. Participants will have the opportunity to complete parts of the Canoeing and Whitewater merit badges but should not expect to complete all of the requirements of either merit badge.

Recommended equipment: sunglasses, sunscreen, dry clothes for ride home, and a hat.

Horseback Riding

A day of horseback riding costs \$50 to add to your schedule. All horseback riding participants must complete the [Horseback Riding Waiver](#) before coming to camp.

Horseback riding Scouts will travel to Winterfrost Farms in Radford, Virginia with our staff to spend a day getting to know the wonderful rescued horses who will take them on a tour of Winterfrost's beautiful trails winding through mountaintop pastures and hillsides along the New River.

Required equipment: your signed Horseback Riding Waiver.

Recommended equipment: closed-toe shoes, sunscreen, sturdy long pants, water bottle, daypack, rain gear, and gloves.

All Terrain Vehicles

A day of ATV costs \$75 to add to your schedule. Due to equipment limitations, there is a limit of 6 participants per day. Our experienced staff will provide all necessary equipment, gear, and training. All ATV participants must complete the [ATV Waiver](#) before coming to camp. Participants must be 16 years old by the first day of the program in keeping with the Guide to Safe Scouting and Virginia law.

ATV groups will travel to the BRSR ATV course the morning of the trip with our staff and will return to Camp Powhatan the afternoon following the trip. Participants will spend the day learning how to safely control and maintain an ATV while completing the ATV Safety Riders Course. There will be a long trail ride after the successful completion of the course through the scenic property of the Blue Ridge Scout Reservation.

Required equipment: your signed ATV Waiver.

Recommended equipment: long sleeve shirt, over-the-ankle boots, and long pants. The ATV Institute requires that all participants wear long sleeves, long pants, and over-the-ankle boots.

Natural Rock Climbing

A day of natural rock climbing costs \$75 to add to your schedule. For safety and equipment reasons, there is a limit of 12 participants per day. Our experienced staff will provide all necessary equipment, gear, and training.

Climbing groups will travel to natural rock faces in the New River Gorge the morning of the trip with our staff and will spend a full day learning and exploring these cliffsides. You will get dinner on the road and will spend the night at the facilities at our rafting outfitter, River Expeditions. Your day of whitewater rafting will follow.

Recommended equipment: overnight gear, bug spray, sunscreen, boots/sturdy shoes/climbing shoes, and a water bottle.

Whitewater Rafting

A day of whitewater rafting costs \$125 to add to your schedule. This activity requires Scouts to complete the Scouting Swim Check with Swimmer proficiency at Camp Powhatan prior to participating. All rafting participants must complete the [Rafting Waiver](#) before coming to camp.

Following dinner at Camp Powhatan, whitewater rafting groups will travel to West Virginia with our staff to a recreational whitewater outfitter the night before their rafting trip. Rock climbing groups will already be at the outfitter following their day of climbing. They will return to Camp Powhatan the afternoon following the trip. The outfitter provides overnight sleeping arrangements, safety briefings, breakfast and a packed lunch, and all necessary rafting gear. Overnight arrangements include restrooms, showers, and small two-person cabins for sleeping. Participants will spend the day whitewater rafting Class II-IV rapids on the New River.

Required equipment: your signed Rafting Waiver.

Recommended equipment: overnight gear, sunglasses, dry clothes for ride home, and a hat.

Claytor Lake Aquatics

A day of Claytor Lake Aquatics costs \$100 to add to your schedule. This activity requires Scouts to complete the Scouting Swim Check with Swimmer proficiency at Camp Powhatan prior to participating. All Claytor Lake participants must complete the [Virginia Boating Safety Course](#) before coming to camp.

We provide all necessary equipment and gear.

Groups will travel to Claytor Lake after breakfast the morning of the trip and will return to Camp Powhatan before dinner the same day. Claytor Lake participants will participate in aquatics activities such as tubing, water skiing, motorboating, and stand up paddleboarding. Lake activities are conditional based on weather conditions and number of participants.

Recommended equipment: sunglasses, a hat, sunscreen, swimwear, towel, and dry clothes for ride home.

BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINEER

Step back in time, slow down, disconnect, and immerse yourself in the rugged life of the 18th-century frontier. The Blue Ridge Mountaineer program transports Scouts to a living history experience where primitive camping meets the spirit of exploration. Longhunters once roamed these mountains, trapping and hunting for months in the untamed wilderness. The famous Wilderness Road brought settlers and adventurers to nearby towns like Newbern, Radford, and Christiansburg, with Ingles Ferry serving as a crucial rest stop for crossing the New River. By the 19th century, the New River Valley was home to hard-working Scots-Irish and German families who carved out a life through sheer determination. They cut timber, farmed the rocky soil, and lived off the land by crafting their own tools, weaving their own clothes, and mastering skills like blacksmithing, leatherworking, and fire-starting without matches. With the crack of a muzzle-loading rifle, they hunted game to feed their families and defend their homesteads. Join us and relive the frontier way of life with hands-on experiences that will bring history to life like never before!



BEFORE CAMP

In addition to the pre-camp requirements for base camp participants, Blue Ridge Mountaineer participants must do the following:

- Register for Blue Ridge Mountaineer on Black Pug after December 31, 2025
- Let us know how you will arrive any and any special needs your group has with [this form](#)
- We recommend that you read some books or watch some videos about the area or the period before coming to camp

PARTICIPATION & LEADERSHIP

This living history experience is for Scouts aged 13 or older by the time of camp. Exceptions may be made for younger Scouts who exemplify maturity in their unit; please make the appropriate requests with our Camp Registrar before registration.

Groups of three or more youth **must send at least one adult leader** to aid in supervision. Larger groups must send at least two leaders per twelve Scouts. Attending female youth must be accompanied by **at least one adult female leader**. Adult leaders may have provisional Scouts from other units in their campsites. If this is the case, those adults will be asked to serve as leader for all scouts in that campsite for the week.

If there are one or two Scouts in your unit who wish to attend, they are welcome to do so as provisional Scouts. Most provisional Scouts who attend have a great time, though scoutmasters and parents should consider the individual Scout's maturity level. We will do our best to keep provisional Scouts from the same unit together, but it may not always be possible to do so. If the provisional Scout has any problems during the week, they must be mature enough to tell a staff member or camp director.

If we experience behavior problems from provisional Scouts, their Scoutmaster and/or parents will be notified. A Scoutmaster conference may be scheduled if adult leaders are present on the Reservation.

FACILITIES

We cannot guarantee that everyone in your unit will be in the same campsite, but we will do our best to camp your unit in the same general area (some may be in an adjacent site).

This camp is remote. Our landline is 1.5 miles from Blue Ridge Mountaineer operations. Do not plan to zoom, call, email, or instant message from this camp, except in case of emergency.

Prepare for primitive living. Showers and flush toilets are a one-mile walk from camp. Blue Ridge Mountaineer has potable water spigots and hand wash stations. Hot water may be had by heating water over a fire. Camp has several latrines.

We recommend that you practice cooking and cleaning up over an open fire. Participants with special dietary needs must let us know in advance with the [Special Dietary Needs Form](#). You will cook your meals with your patrol over an open fire, so individual meals are challenging. The camp is remote and small, and special foods are simply not available without notice, but we will do our best to accommodate. If you have a special diet, you are welcome to bring your own food.

Our Tavern has a variety of frontier souvenirs, snacks, and world-famous Mountaineer root beer. We recommend that Scouts bring \$100 to spend throughout the week. The Tavern is **strictly cash only**.

ADVANCEMENT

The purpose of Blue Ridge Mountaineer is not to earn merit badges, but to disconnect, slow down, and experience an earlier style of living. We will not be running merit badge classes and do not provide merit badge counselors. By participating in our programs, scouts may complete some of the requirements toward

cooking, metalwork, and leatherwork merit badges, but it will be up to the unit to count these requirements toward the badge. Many troops send older scouts and recent Eagles to Mountaineer for “one last big campout together.”

CHECK-IN & WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Plan to arrive at the Camp Ottari Welcome Center between 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM. Please do not arrive early. At check-in, you will meet with the health officer for medical form review and health check, and receive your 18th-century style Blue Ridge Mountaineer shirt.

If others in your unit are staying at Camp Powhatan, you may arrive at Powhatan and then ride a van shuttle to Ottari. Mountaineers do not need to do camp tours, swim checks, or medical check-in at Camp Powhatan. Be sure to let the check-in staff at Camp Powhatan know that you will ride the shuttle. It is helpful to let the Blue Ridge Mountaineer Director know that you will ride the shuttle as well (use this [link](#)!)

Non-camp vehicles are not permitted in the Blue Ridge Mountaineer area; therefore, troop vehicles should be parked in approved Ottari lots.

Once you have checked in at Camp Ottari, you will hike approximately 1.5 miles down to Blue Ridge Mountaineer. (Please use the special accommodations form if you or a scout needs transportation to the outpost. It is possible to transport people and gear, though hiking into Mountaineer is part of the experience.) At the outpost, you will have a brief orientation and a tour of the site. You'll be directed to your campsite and have the chance to set up your belongings in your tent. Our flag ceremony is at 5:45 PM and dinner will follow flags. Sunday night dinner will be prepared for you.

Each day begins with coffee and a briefing for leaders and senior patrol leaders. Patrols should have fires started at 6:30 AM and be ready to eat breakfast around 8:00 AM. During the day, you will learn about frontier life. You'll shoot and care for muzzle-loading rifles and shotguns, make your own Green River knife, spend time blacksmithing at the forge, throw knives and tomahawks, build fires without matches, and cook your own meals. You'll have time for activities ranging from basic blacksmithing to wilderness survival. Some evenings, the Blue Ridge Mountaineer Tavern will be open with root beer, snacks, and souvenirs. On some days you'll also have the opportunity to hike into Camp Ottari to take a shower. On one evening, we will have the opportunity to travel in time and space to Camp Powhatan to visit the Trading Post. On Thursday evening, we'll have a rendezvous - an opportunity to show off wares and crafts made during the week. Friday afternoon, we'll pack up and head to Camp Powhatan for a reunion with troops there, for the opportunity to visit the highfalutin trading post, and for the chance to participate in the Friday night campfire and OA callout. Throughout the week, Scouts and adults who participate in the Blue Ridge Mountaineer program will develop an appreciation for the life skills and slower pace of the 19th-century settler. You will learn to cook meals as a patrol over an open fire using dutch ovens and cast iron cookware, and learn to use blacksmith tools and metalworking skills at Clark's Forge. You can learn to build and light a fire using flint and steel and build a Russell Green River sheath knife and sheath. You will learn to safely shoot .50 caliber muzzle-loading rifles and shotguns and learn about survival, traps, snares, edible plants, tracking, and other skills.

After lunchtime on Friday, we will have a closing ceremony at about 1:30 PM. Scouts may self-transport directly from Ottari, or take the shuttle to Powhatan for Friday evening dinner, closing campfire, and Order of the Arrow callout ceremony. Troops who are only attending the Blue Ridge Mountaineer program are welcome to depart camp Friday afternoon if they wish to skip the Powhatan experience.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have scouts or leaders with mobility issues or who otherwise require special accommodations, contact the camp registrar for more information. Though not flat, Blue Ridge Mountaineer is one of the flattest places on the Blue Ridge Scout Reservation, and the camp is smaller than most. The program has a relaxed pace. Let us know what you need, and we will try to accommodate.

LEADERS' MEETINGS

Leaders and patrol leaders meet each morning on the tavern porch for coffee and a quick check-in. These meetings are an important source of information and a time to ask questions of our staff.

MOUNTAINEER GENERAL DAILY SCHEDULE

6:30 AM	Breakfast fires started
7:00 AM	Leaders' meeting and coffee on the porch
8:00 AM	Breakfast and flags
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Morning program times
12:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Afternoon program times, including free time
5:00 PM	Dinner fires started
6:00 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM	Flags and evening programs
8:30 PM	Tavern
11:00 PM	All quiet in camp

EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

We will provide cots, wall tents (plan on sharing), and cooking and eating utensils, so you don't need to pack a tent or mess kit.

Pack your personal gear so that you can carry it 1.5 miles to the outpost. Bring gear of an early style. We will provide you with a Blue Ridge Mountaineer shirt. That shirt, with the earth tone long pants you bring, is the uniform for Blue Ridge Mountaineer. Scouts and leaders will wear the Blue Ridge Mountaineer uniform for the entirety of the camp. Pants should be long, earth-tone, and made of cotton, linen, or wool. Khakis or dockers are fine, but do not wear camouflage or jeans. Shorts are discouraged, and shorts and synthetic materials for clothing are a safety hazard at the forge, so are not allowed at all there.

Packing List

- backpack
- canteen/water bottle
- small flashlight with extra batteries
- matches
- bandana
- two wool blankets or a sleeping bag (it can drop to 40°F some nights)
- warm jacket
- pocket toiletry items
- two towels and washcloth
- shower shoes/sandals
- two pairs of earth tone long pants
- extra socks
- extra underclothing
- one spare shirt
- pair brown or black hiking boots
- pair of spare shoes
- pocketknife
- swimsuit (for creek day)
- wide leather belt to carry your camp knife
- early style broad-brimmed hat or scarf
- spending money for the Tavern (recommended \$100)

If you play a period-appropriate musical instrument such as a fiddle, harmonica, banjo, or guitar, you may bring it at your own risk.

Do not bring music players/speakers, firearms, sheath knives, or fireworks.

HIGH KNOLL TRAIL CAMP

Lace up your boots and set off on the High Knoll Trail - Blue Ridge Scout Reservation's premier high adventure backpacking program! Along the way, you'll discover our staffed outpost camps, where modern high adventure meets timeless classics that have been thrilling Scouts since 1975. Whether you're tackling tough trails or enjoying off-the-path fun, every day brings new excitement. But be prepared—these activities are not for the faint of heart! You'll need solid physical fitness to embrace the vigorous challenges ahead. High Knoll will deliver you the best backpacking experience, packed with daily adventures and unforgettable team-building moments.



BEFORE CAMP

In addition to the pre-camp requirements for base camp participants, High Knoll Trail Camp participants must do the following:

- Register for High Knoll Trail Camp on Black Pug after December 31, 2025
- Bring a copy of your CPR/First Aid card and Wilderness First Aid card
- Train and prepare as a crew

PREPARATION & TRAINING

LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 20, 2026

Shakedown hikes are trips that are undertaken prior to a long intense trip and are intended to give the participants practice and preparation for the experience that they are about to undertake. They should start off with easier hikes to train those who are not as experienced and should progressively get more difficult and more technical, placing more responsibility on each of the crew members. Preferably, crews should do shakedown hikes in mountainous areas to prepare for the mountains on the reservation, but if there are no mountains around your area then there are other options that you can use, such as walking on sand and up and down steps. The more time spent in preparation for High Knoll, the more confident that the crew will be in having a successful trip and sail through the week with few issues. When going out on shakedown hikes, even if just for a day, have the crews carry what they would normally carry for a trek so that they can get used to the process of working together.

Map and compass skills are critical for spending a week on the trails at High Knoll. You may bring GPS units, but at some points throughout the week you will be hiking in and out of deep valleys where satellites may not be able to reach your device. GPS units run on batteries whereas a compass does not. Make sure that the crew is properly trained in how to navigate and read a map and compass. Each crew will be provided with two maps of the reservation, one with the trails planned out for the week and the other blank to use for navigation. Please make sure that the crew can demonstrate the proper use of these as our staff will ask them to demonstrate this when the crew arrives during our Ranger Shakedown process.

ARRIVAL & CHECK-IN

If your troop is traveling to Camp Powhatan, arrange for your High Knoll crew to be dropped off at Camp Ottari first. Upon arrival, the crew will meet their ranger, plan their itinerary with our map makers, perform medical checks, and verify attendance and fees. Plan on hiking your gear into the camp as vehicles will need to be parked in our High Knoll parking lot. Extra gear, such as extra clean clothes and your Field Uniform, should be stored inside your vehicles due to limited storage available in our buildings. Crews will spend all of their nights (Sunday through Friday) in their own tents, unless they participate in whitewater rafting.

After the Sunday shakedown and informational session conducted by one of the rangers, your crew will be released to hike upon our network of over 100 miles of trails crisscrossing the Scout Reservation. Though some crews shoot for the 50-miler award, typical groups hike around seven miles each day before ending up at one of our backcountry camps.

PARTICIPATION & LEADERSHIP

High Knoll Trail Camp is open to all Scouts who will be **at least 12 years old by September 1, 2026**, but units are encouraged to exercise caution by evaluating Scouts' maturity and physical ability before attending. Every crew must have two leaders or crew advisors at least 21 years old who are registered in Scouting. Any crew with female youth must have **at least one adult female leader. At least one member of each crew,** preferably two or more, must hold a current American Red Cross **Wilderness First Aid certification**, Emergency Care and Safety Institute (ECSI) Wilderness First Aid or equivalent, and current ARC or ECSI Adult and Child CPR/AED training or equivalent.

Due to staffing constraints, we do not have the ability to provide leadership for your crew; however, you can register as a partial crew and we will pair you with another partial crew. Many groups find leaders among their troop alumni. Except where health and safety are involved, all crew leadership stems from the elected crew leader. This youth leader's responsibilities should begin now with pre-trip planning.

High Knoll is designed as a low impact camping program. Thus, the ideal crew should have 10 youth and 2 adults. We often accept larger and smaller groups, but please check with the Registrar for confirmation. Individual youth (provisional campers) should submit their registration fee and application by April 1. Our registrar will place provisional campers within a crew.

In order for the week to go smoothly, crew duties need to be assigned in a way that fairly balances responsibilities on the trail. Duties may include: assigning a crew leader, assigning a cooking/cleaning rotation, bear bag hanging/food storage, navigator, etc. Make sure during the shakedown hikes that these roles and duties are being practiced so the crew as a whole can be prepared for a week on the trail.

HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

In case of flooding, stay on high ground. Greenwood Trail (the fire road) is an especially good place to be. In all emergencies, make every effort to reach an outpost or base camp. If water is so high that hiking is unsafe and you are in low level areas, find a point to stay that is above the levels of nearby creeks and wait for help. For lightning: get off the ridge tops. For fires: move as quickly as possible AWAY from the direction of fire spread. Wildfire spread is generally greatest on steep slopes and/or when pushed by wind so pay attention to the terrain on which you are hiking as well as the environmental conditions each day.

Proper washing and rinsing of dishes will help protect your crew's health and keep you in the fittest shape for the week. Never use cold water; only hot water will prevent dysentery and diarrhea. Time taken to boil water for 8 minutes for rinsing is time well spent. Rinse dishes in boiling water treated with sanitizing tablets that are provided to the crew. In order to achieve maximum effectiveness only use these tablets as directed.

OUTPOST FACILITIES

As you are going by or through our base camps, make sure that you stop by and speak with someone in the main office so that they can point you in the direction of the shower facilities that will best suit the entire crew. Backcountry cleanliness is equally important for your health and others' happiness. A complete bath may not be possible but consider taking a "bucket bath" in a secluded area. Carry water at least 200 feet from springs, lakes, and streams, use biodegradable soap, and please don't place contaminated water back into the water supply as this is the same water that you will be drinking from throughout the week.

Pit latrines are at all staffed outpost camps. If you find it necessary to use a latrine when not at our established areas, use a small "cathole" to get rid of human waste. Make each cathole at least 200 feet from any campsite, trail, or water source, and choose a location that isn't likely to be visited by others. After use, cover the hole completely. Place nothing in a latrine or cathole except human waste and papers necessary for this action.

There is a water source in each outpost. All water outside of the base camps must be treated as there may be microorganisms that can make you sick. There are three acceptable methods of purification: boiling, Polar Pure or Potable Aqua pills (iodine based), and two water pumps/filters (provided by the crew). In most outposts, the creeks are the source of our water used for drinking, cooking, and cleaning. Swimming, bathing or washing of any items in the creeks are not allowed.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

After Sunday registration and your pack shake-down, our staff will prepare dinner for the hikers, and we will practice cleanup techniques as a group. After dinner there will be an opening campfire that will introduce all of the staff to the crew in a way only High Knoll can perform.

Throughout the week, crews will be expected to cook their own breakfast (food provided). We recommend that crews hit the trails each day promptly following breaking camp in the cool of the day. You should be in your program outpost around lunchtime, where you can then enjoy your afternoon program. Each night will bring a campfire and evening snack prepared by the staff. On Friday, crews will hike back into Camp Ottari for the rest of the evening program. You will check in at the Ottari Welcome Center as soon as you arrive back at camp, and can drop your packs at the High Knoll Commissary and, please, take a shower before dinner. Our staff will cook Friday dinner for you and present a closing campfire and award the High Knoll patches. On Saturday, crews will enjoy a light continental breakfast and depart from camp no later than 9:30 AM.

During the five days spent backpacking, a crew will cover from 35 to 50 miles over steep, rocky, mountainous terrain. The trails are a combination of narrow footpaths and abandoned logging roads. Although the trails are blazed with white paint, crews will need to be able to navigate by map and compass. The program is physically demanding, so get into shape. A 50-miler is possible if a crew is very experienced and fit; otherwise, you might spend your entire week hiking and will miss out on the program features. By properly working together, the crew will reach maximum hiking efficiency. This ranges from splitting up who carries what so everyone is carrying the same proportional weight, to splitting up the duties that will need to be taken on throughout the trip. When everyone is working together, the crew should be working as a well oiled machine.

The weather on the trail tends to be warm and humid with daytime temperatures in the high 80s, with nighttime temperatures falling into the 50s. If you wish to use a GPS: the Powhatan parking lot is 36°57'40" N, 80°34'30" W. Ottari Lake is 36°59'30" N, 80°34'30" W. These locations are not pinpoint accurate, but they should easily put you within the boundaries of each of the camps.

RUGGED ITINERARY - 50 MILER AWARD

Though all of the itineraries will have steep trails and challenging days, we can schedule the trek to be easier or more difficult. As our rangers create schedules for the week, we often run into situations where a crew will need to have a longer than normal day's hike. We assign these longer miles to the rugged itinerary crews. If we know that a crew is less experienced, we plan for shorter hikes. Upon their arrival on Sunday, we sit down with the crews and map out the actual trails they will hike. Crews looking for a more physical challenge can then request and receive the more challenging trails. Crews looking for the 50-Miler Award can review their

scheduled itinerary, calculate the miles and then pick days for taking additional short hikes, to add up to 50 miles during the week.

MENU

We issue the trail food to your crew on Sunday afternoon. There will be a mid-week food drop, so you will carry about 2½ days of food with you on the trail. If you require any special dietary needs or have any dietary restrictions, let us know prior to March 1, 2026. We order some specialty food for vegetarians and for those with peanut allergies, but we need early knowledge to have enough on hand. Please send a note to the camp registrar indicating the number of hikers who have dietary needs and are requesting this service. Each program outpost will have an evening campfire program which will feature a snack of some kind, such as apple or peach cobbler, brownies, cake, “sawdust stew,” etc. Your crew should provide its own trail snacks.

EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

A Scout’s pack should weigh 25% of ideal body weight. Proper fit and placement of backpacks is crucial for an enjoyable experience. This should be done by a licensed outfitter to properly fit packs to the individual's body.

Per crew: two backpacking stoves and fuel, water purification filters/pumps or tablets, spices for cooking, snacks, backpacking tents or tarp (hammocks must be tree-friendly), waterproof matches, bear bag and 75 ft. of 1/8 inch nylon rope, crew first aid kit, insect repellent, sunscreen, biodegradable liquid soap, spare rope/cordage, sewing kit & equipment repair kit, trowel for cat holes

Crew first aid kit: one 2-inch roller bandage, two 3-inch roller bandages, two rolls of 1-inch adhesive tape, scissors, tweezers, safety pins, water purification tablets, one box of assorted adhesive bandages, matches, twelve 3 x 3 inch sterile pads, moleskin, antacid tablets, pain reliever (aspirin, etc.), biohazard bag, gatorade, twenty four alcohol swabs, rash/poison ivy remedy, sunscreen, paper and pencil, mouth barrier device, antibiotic ointment, petroleum jelly, two pairs of latex or nitrile gloves, four triangular bandages (40”)

Personal items: sleeping bag in waterproof sack/heavy plastic, sleeping pad (closed cell or waterproof), waterproof ground cloth, waterproof pack cover, small towel and washcloth, roll of toilet paper in Ziploc bag, toothbrush and toothpaste, personal first aid kit, pocketknife, small flashlight with extra battery and bulb, waterproof watch, compass, whistle

Clothing: one pair of shorts, two t-shirts, fleece or wool jacket/vest, belt, pair of long pants (required for horseback riding, mountain boarding, and logging daze), two pairs of underwear, two pairs of boot socks, five pairs of lightweight liner socks, one pair of well broken-in boots with new laces, one pair of light shoes to wear around camp, hat with brim, rain jacket or poncho, Field uniform (optional for Friday night campfire)

Hiking boots are the most crucial piece of gear that you will need for the week. Proper boot selection and fitting is one of the most important skills that hikers develop as they gain experience.

Eating utensils: plastic bag or large cup, drinking cup, spoon, 1-quart water bottles/hydration system like a platypus, pair of hot tongs, tarp for cooking area

Provided by camp: soap & sanitizing tablets for dishwashing, serving spoon, scrub pad, trail food

LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 20, 2026

Found in staffed outposts: pots for cooking/boiling water, garbage bags, pans for dishwashing, bow saw

Evening temperatures on the Reservation are erratic, dropping as low as 40° on some nights. We recommend that you bring a summer weight bag with a sheet, fleece, or synthetic sleeping bag liner, and a closed foam sleeping pad. If you use an inflatable pad, please bring a repair patch and sealer in your crew's repair kit as holes are always possible.

Your unit should bring at least two backpacking stoves. We recommend that you use either white gas or kerosene stoves to avoid carrying fuel cartridges because the cartridges can't be refilled, and are typically heavier because you have to carry more of them. Backpacking stoves are to be used only under adult supervision, and never in tents. All fuel must be carried in designed fuel bottles, easily distinguishable from water bottles. Practice using your stoves and repairing them before arriving at camp.

There are no structures for your crew to camp in on the trail. You will need to bring your own trail shelters, both tents and a cooking tarp. Scouting National Camp standards specify that all tents used in camp must be marked "No Flames in Tents." Please either stencil this message onto your tents or attach a tag with this message. Hammocks must be supported by wide webbing or padding to prevent damage to our trees.

PROGRAM OUTPOSTS

During your week on High Knoll, your crew will be able to participate in five outpost programs. Please note that if a program area has more demand than we can meet, we will give preference to the first crews who have completed their full fee payments and have made their selections. High Knoll is a small operation, and each outpost is staffed to handle approximately 20 hikers during a program day. We custom-plan each crew's itinerary, and you will hike across the reservation each day to one of your chosen outposts, where we can fit you into that day's schedule. Upon your arrival at camp on Sunday, we'll share your outpost schedule with you and then plot the trails that you will need to follow.

The following are typical outposts offered at High Knoll; however, due to yearly changes in both staff talent and in availability, these outpost programs may change. The program outposts included in your basic camp fee are mountain boarding, Point Camp, White Oak, horseback riding, and Rendezvous.

Mountain Boarding

For those of you who enjoy high adrenaline mixed with some speed, mountain boarding combines the downhill thrill of snowboarding with an all-terrain skateboard. This sport features a strap on skateboard with oversize tires that is fun to ride on our backwoods trail. Our experienced staff will train you in the techniques and provide the gear.

Point Camp

Climb up and rappel down our natural rock face overlooking Big Laurel Creek. Our staff teaches the proper techniques and movements needed to climb and rappel. During wet weather, there is also an indoor climbing facility that has an extensive bouldering area and two 30 foot vertical walls that provide all degrees of difficulty.

Horseback Riding

Horseback riding groups will leave from Camp Ottari and travel to Winterfrost Farm in Radford, VA with our staff the morning of the trip and will return to camp the afternoon following the trip. Winterfrost Farm provides training and safety briefings and any necessary gear. Participants will be given a group riding lesson, followed by a trail ride to a beautiful lunch stop, and will ride back to the barn in the afternoon. Get your boots or belt branded with the signature HK logo at the evening campfire.

We would greatly appreciate any crews participating in horseback riding to have their own form of transportation, but we can provide it if necessary.

White Oak Camp (Logging Daze)

White Oak Camp features our traditional Logging Daze program: using crosscut saws to cut a section of a tree, split out a shingle with a froe, brand the shingle, and make a spoon with a gouge.

Rendezvous

At our 19th century trapper's camp, load and shoot .50 caliber muzzle loading rifles. Throw tomahawks and learn about wilderness living skills such as trapping. This living history program will be a real mountaineer's experience.

VOYAGEUR TREK

For nearly 300 years, the French fur trade thrived thanks to two legendary groups: the coureurs de bois, or “wood-runners,” and the voyageurs, or “travelers.” While the coureurs de bois mastered Native trails and wilderness skills, the voyageurs ruled the waterways, expertly navigating rapids and hauling heavy loads through rugged terrain. Often called “pork eaters” by their wood-runner counterparts, these voyageurs were the backbone of the booming fur trade in the New World. Living off salt pork and dried peas, they paddled tirelessly from dawn till dusk, carrying massive loads during portages - and always with a lively French tune on their lips. Step into their world and experience the strength, endurance, and spirit of these adventurers as you trek the New River!



BEFORE CAMP

In addition to the pre-camp requirements for base camp participants, Voyageur Trek participants must do the following:

- Register for Voyageur Trek on Black Pug after December 31, 2025
- We recommend that you read some books or watch some videos about the area or the Voyageur period before coming to camp
- Train and prepare as a crew

PREPARATION & TRAINING

Hone your canoeing skills by practicing on flat water and moving water before arriving at camp. We also recommend that your crew practice lighting and using a camp stove. Begin gathering your gear at least one week prior to your trek and consider having a “shakedown” with a knowledgeable person from your unit. As you pack, your goal should be to bring the minimum amount of equipment necessary to be safe and

comfortable regardless of weather or unexpected swims. Remember that you will have to portage your gear at several places!

PARTICIPATION & LEADERSHIP

Due to the challenging nature of the program, Scouts must be at least 13 years old AND have completed the 8th grade OR 14 years old.

Units must register as a crew with three or more youth and appropriate adult leadership from the unit. In addition to our guide staff, we require that the unit provide at least one male adult leader over 21 years old for crews with male youth and at least one female adult leader over 21 years old for crews with female youth. Additional adults are more than welcome to join the trip.

There are two options for adult registration for Voyageur Trek on Black Pug: participating adult and supporting adult. Participating adults will have the option to fully participate alongside the youth participants. Supporting adults do not have the option to participate in the program, and are expected to assist our staff in driving camp vehicles, transporting gear, and supervising program participants.

CHECK-IN & WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Voyageur Trek participants should arrive at Camp Ottari between 1:00 and 2:30 PM on Sunday to allow ample time to complete the medical check and swim check before dinner. **All participants must pass a swim test at Camp Ottari** with a “swimmer” proficiency in order to go canoeing. Voyageur Trek participants should meet at the campfire ring at 4:00 PM on Sunday to meet with the Voyageur Trek staff who will guide you through the rest of your day. Plan on setting up your tent for the night and helping with dinner preparations. The night will conclude with a campfire. Plan on backpacking your gear into the camp. Vehicles should be parked in the main parking lot for storage for the week. Crews will spend all nights (Sunday through Friday) under their trail shelters.

Monday will be spent practicing the crew’s canoeing skills and communication at Lake Ottari with our staff, and you will have the chance to experience a Mountaineer campfire that night. Your crew will spend Tuesday through Thursday canoeing the New River. While on the river, a support vehicle will shadow the trek moving gear to each day’s camping area. Participants will only carry personal items such as water, food, and rain gear on the river, so we do recommend a small dry bag for this purpose. Due to summer water levels and dam construction there are some discontinuities in the voyage that require both human- and vehicle-assisted portages, so be prepared to work hard both on and off the river.

After a quick trip down the river on Friday, your group will be transported to Camp Powhatan where you will spend the night. Depending on transportation times, you may have some free time on Friday to enjoy base camp. You will attend the Camp Powhatan closing campfire and camp overnight at Hemlock Grove. We are happy to coordinate the retrieval of any unit vehicles that were left at Camp Ottari.

OPPORTUNITIES & ADVANCEMENT

Participants will complete requirements for the Canoeing merit badge as they learn to read the river, shoot the rapids, and calmly handle any emergencies the river might present. Please let staff know if you wish to earn that merit badge. During the trek, there will be ample time for scouts and scouters to cast their lines and angle for one of the many species of fish that abound in the New River. Please check the requirements for fishing licenses.

Depending on group interest and availability of service projects, there will be an opportunity to earn the 50-Miler Award during the trek.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Sleeping bags should be compact and rated for around +30 degrees. Pack the bag and extra clothing in a compression bag. Place all this in a heavy weight plastic bag.

Daytime temperatures range from 70-100° F. Evening temperature range from 40-75° F.

Required items: **backpacking tent** (hammocks are not recommended), insect repellent, eating utensils, plastic bowl, two water bottles with covered mouthpieces at least 32 oz. each, small dry bag with roll-down clip, backpack or duffel bag to store gear, closures to protect your lunch and personal gear, small towel no longer than 2' x 4', pocketknife, toothbrush and toothpaste, swimwear, sunglasses, pair of dry shorts (no jeans), two t-shirts (to wear around camp, can be cotton), one wicking shirt to wear on river, fleece or vest, rain jacket and rain pants (no ponchos), several pairs of socks (wool or wicking synthetic), several pairs of underwear, wide-brimmed hat, pair of sturdy river shoes, pair of shoes to wear around camp, whistle, sleeping bag, sleeping pad (closed cell or waterproof), ziploc bags and ditty bags for gear, small flashlight or headlamp, two carabiners to clip water bottle in canoe, Scouting field uniform

Recommended items: cash for incidentals, fishing license, fishing equipment (small pocket-sized tackle box), knee pads, pair of gloves for paddling, small binoculars, personal first aid kit, bottle of sunscreen (SPF 50 or higher), baby powder, box of waterproof matches, deck of cards or small game, camera, wet wipes, trowel (for cat holes), bandana, lip balm

For participants wishing to fish while on the river, a [5-day Virginia Fishing Permit](#) is needed before arriving at camp. A permit is required for all Virginia residents 16 years and older and all non-residents 12 and older.

We provide: canoeing gear (canoe, life vests, paddles, and helmets), safety equipment (first aid kit, z-drag kit, throw bags), trowel and toilet paper, cooking gear (food, polar pure, water dromedary, cooking pots, backpacking stoves)

We will provide you with three meals per day and a small snack for the river. If you have any special dietary needs, it is important that you complete the [Special Dietary Needs Form](#) and submit prior to your arrival.

SCUBA

In the Blue Ridge Mountains, adventure goes beneath the surface! Thanks to our partnership with Riverwalkers Diving, we're thrilled to offer an exclusive SCUBA program, perfect for older Scouts eager to dive into something extraordinary. Escape base camp and embark on an underwater journey that unlocks a lifetime of aquatic adventures. This entry-level SCUBA certification opens the door to diving anywhere in the world. Get ready to explore the depths and gain skills that will last a lifetime!



BEFORE CAMP

In addition to the pre-camp requirements for base camp participants, SCUBA participants must do the following:

- Complete and bring the SCUBA [SDI Medical Form](#)
- Complete and bring the SCUBA [SDI General Liability Form](#)
- Register for SCUBA on Black Pug after December 31, 2025
- Register on the Riverwalkers website (event link coming soon) and complete necessary waivers
- Complete necessary online pre-requisite training courses on Riverwalkers website

ONLINE REGISTRATION

You will use our Black Pug registration system to register for our SCUBA program, which will open completely after December 31, 2025. We have partnered with a local diving company, Riverwalkers, to provide the best and safest SCUBA program possible. Riverwalkers requires that participants complete additional online training on their website, and participants will be notified through Black Pug when these training sessions are

ready to be completed on the Riverwalkers website. There is no additional cost to registration and training through Riverwalkers, your base fee of \$750 covers this.

If you have any questions or concerns specifically for Riverwalkers, you can visit their website ([link to come](#)) or contact Alan Lang at 540-632-1674 or Alan@DiveRW.com.

The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) offers a multilevel scholarship program to introduce Venturers and Sea Scouts to the exciting underwater world. The deadline to apply for this scholarship is December 31, 2025. Apply [here](#).

PARTICIPATION & LEADERSHIP

All participants must be 14 years old by the time they arrive to camp. Participants must pass the Scouting swim test at Camp Powhatan to qualify for SCUBA participation for the rest of the week.

You must have a minimum of 3 scout participants to be eligible to sign up for SCUBA. While we have staff who will help supervise program as they are able, you must provide at least one adult leader to assist with supervision of scouts and transportation. Unit adult leaders can earn credit toward the Leader's Award by assisting with transportation and we greatly appreciate any adult assistance with supervision of activities.

CHECK-IN & WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Participants will report to Camp Powhatan and complete their Sunday check-in, medical review, and swim check with the rest of their unit. SCUBA participants will be based at Camp Powhatan, where they will stay overnight, eat meals in the dining hall, and participate in evening programs if they choose. Our staff, in partnership with unit leadership, will provide transportation for participants to the Riverwalkers shop and diving locations throughout the week. We will send along packaged lunches each day that the participants are at a separate location.

Monday will focus on discussion of safety standards and procedures, with lessons and classroom instruction describing proper set-up and usage procedures for equipment and confined water instruction. On Monday, there will most likely be time to dive in a pool once the classroom instruction is completed. On Tuesday and Wednesday, participants will visit open water diving sites - most likely the Blacksburg Quarry or the New River at the 114 Bridge - to learn proper water entry procedures, snorkeling, and equipment adjustments, and become comfortable in the water. Wednesday evening will be spent traveling (dinner on the road!) to a dive site at Sommersville Lake, WV. Participants will camp at the lake overnight. Thursday will be spent diving at Sommersville and wrapping up requirements. Scouts will return to camp in time for dinner at Powhatan.

If inclement weather or other circumstances beyond our control occur, participants may not be able to complete all the requirements of the course. The program is structured to be completed over the course of four days, with Friday functioning as a backup day for program as needed.

OPPORTUNITIES & ADVANCEMENT

While the Open Water certification requires a minimum of 4 dives, we are very excited to be able to offer up to 9 unique dives for each participant throughout their week. Assuming their full attention and participation in

the program, scouts will have the opportunity to complete requirements for the Scouting Snorkeling Award, the Scuba Diving merit badge, the Scouting SCUBA Award, and an Open Water Diving certification.

This is the entry-level for SCUBA diving. With this Open Water certification, it is possible to dive anywhere in the world. Unlike many certifications, the Open Water certification never expires. The course consists of three parts: online learning, classroom, confined water, and open water. Each component must be completed to achieve this course certification. Participants who complete all requirements will graduate and receive their open water diver certification.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Participants have three options for SCUBA gear:

1. Reach out to Riverwalkers to purchase a gear package that includes a mask, snorkel, and fins for approximately \$140.
2. Borrow used gear from Riverwalkers for the duration of the week at no extra cost.
3. Bring your own personal diving gear.

Recommended equipment: personal tent, sleeping bag, change of clothes, wetsuit (if you prefer your personal over rented), sunglasses, disposable camera, and personal snorkeling gear.