



Camp Gorsuch Scouts BSA Program Guide



Summer 2026

Welcome to Your Camp!

Camp Gorsuch Scout Camp strives to provide a well rounded Scout experience for all levels of scouting, allowing the Scouts to learn life-long skills as well as earn opportunities for advancement. Attached is the program guide for this year, allowing you an opportunity to plan for evening in-camp activities. It can also help you focus your activities prior to coming to camp so that you can complete the badges you would like while you are here. During the week you will participate in the following activities while at camp:

Aquatics: **Note: Must be classified as swimmers at Camp Gorsuch to participate in aquatics merit badges.** A classic camp area, our waterfront is located on the shore of beautiful Mirror Lake. Aquatics covers a wide range of both activities and merit badges. Activities offered down at the waterfront this year are: Polar Bear Swim (at 6:45 a.m. on Thursday!), Mile Swim, and Stand Up Paddleboarding! The merit badges being offered this year are: Canoeing, Kayaking, Lifesaving (13+), Motorboating, Rowing, Small Boat Sailing, and Swimming. The waterfront is open every day during open area time, as well as during family night after the Battle for Bear Mountain.

Shooting Sports: Located up the hill you will find the archery, rifle (modern cartridge option) and shotgun ranges. The archery range is open every day during free time. The rifle and shotgun ranges will alternate being open. Ammunition will have to be purchased for the rifle and shotgun range at the trading post to participate in open or Troop shoots.

Nature/Ecology: The nature area is located at the base of the hill to the shooting sports ranges. The merit badges being offered in nature this year are: Environmental Science (13+), Fish and Wildlife, Fly Fishing, Forestry, Insect Study, Nature, and Sustainability.

Scoutcraft: Scoutcraft is located behind Dan's Palace. The merit badges offered in scoutcraft are: Geocaching, Golf (Disc Version), Pioneering, Painting, Plumbing, and Wilderness Survival.

Cheechako Trail: The Cheechako Trail is located in Dan's Palace. During the week the Cheechako Trail scouts will work on learning many of the requirements for rank advancement for Tenderfoot, 2nd Class and 1st Class. This year we have 2 options, so choose the option that best meets your needs. The first option is a 3 session Trail designed for newly crossed over Scouts. Here they will work through the skills together as a Patrol, learning the importance of teamwork, leadership and the Patrol method. The second option is a Skills Block targeting

each level, tenderfoot, second class and first class, independently. With this option you can take only what you need. If you have been a Scout for a while and really want a challenge then the Silver Sourdough program is for you! Here is a place for you to put the Scout skills you have learned to the test. Can you build a coracle? Are you the best dutch oven cook? Come challenge yourself and see who comes out on top.

Handicraft: Another classic camp area handicraft is located along the road under the Mary Louise Rasmusson pavilion. The merit badges offered at handicraft are: Art, Basketry, Chess, Game Design, Indian Lore, Inventing, Leatherwork, Moviemaking, Signs, Signals and Codes, Theater, Welding and Woodcarving. Handicraft is staffed during open area time to help Scouts work on projects.

COPE/Climbing: The Climbing merit badge takes place at the Brotherhood Tower located at the end of the road through camp. Cope (Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience) is a two session block, that allows you to challenge yourself, as well as work on teamwork and leadership skills.

Personal Safety: With the recent updates to the First Aid merit badge, we made the decision to move this to a 2 session block so that we can complete all of the skills required. Please remember that to take this merit badge a Scout needs to have reached the rank of First Class. We will also be offering Search and Rescue in the afternoon. Both classes will be taught in the dining hall.

Silver Sourdough Program - The Silver Sourdough Program is an older scout program at Camp Gorsuch. Scouts will be given a daily challenge, as well as a daily task, that will allow them to showcase their teamwork and leadership skills. These may include building a coracle at the waterfront, a shooting challenge, an activity at Cope, a dutch oven cook-off, designing an obstacle for the Sourdough Run that younger Scouts will participate in, and this is just the beginning. Scouts will have to complete a specific number of challenges to become a Silver Sourdough. The activities will be scheduled during the last session of every day and some evenings.

Evening Program: Every evening during camp there are activities and events planned to help entertain and bring our scouts together as patrols. Most nights have open areas offering scouts opportunities for patrol/troop shoots/swims.

Vespers is a non-denominational spirit of scouting church style service put on by our camp chaplain. Attendees of vespers are requested to wear field uniforms.

Opening campfire is a show put on by the staff. Scouts and adults are invited to Dan's Palace to enjoy a collection of skits and songs as well as an inspiring closing.

Gorsuch Game Night is a more relaxed night, with various games set up around camp. In the dining hall chess, checkers, and various other board games are available to play. On Scott's Field volleyball and other sports activities will be available. Major program areas will also be open at this time.

Battle for Bear Mountain and the Sourdough Mud Run all take place on the same night. Battle for Bear Mountain is a patrol/troop team based activity. The team will work together to sink the other troops' boats, while keeping theirs afloat. The Sourdough Mud Run starts at COPE and participants run through a course designed by our COPE/Climbing staff, which ends at the dining hall. We love when families come out to camp and get to participate in activities with their scouts, and this is the night for that! You might even call it Family Night! The shooting sports ranges, waterfront, handicraft, and scoutcraft areas will all be open. Families do need to buy ammo for rifle range use though.

Troop night is an open night for the troops to use as they see fit. Troop night is a great night to arrange troop shoots/swims with the program areas, or even to review merit badge progress. Service/conservation projects will be available for troops wishing to complete those. Troop night is also the night that our wilderness survival campout takes place, with the wilderness survival merit badge scouts going out to put their skills to the test.

Closing campfire is always a special night at camp. Troops will be putting on a show for each other and any family that wishes to attend. Staff members give out any special awards earned through the week by campers during the campfire as well.

Be Prepared Relay: The relay will test a multitude of scout skills, and find out just how prepared our scouts, and their scoutmasters, are. Teams will have to complete a challenge at every program area in camp.

Camp Dates, Location, Address, & Phone

Camp Dates

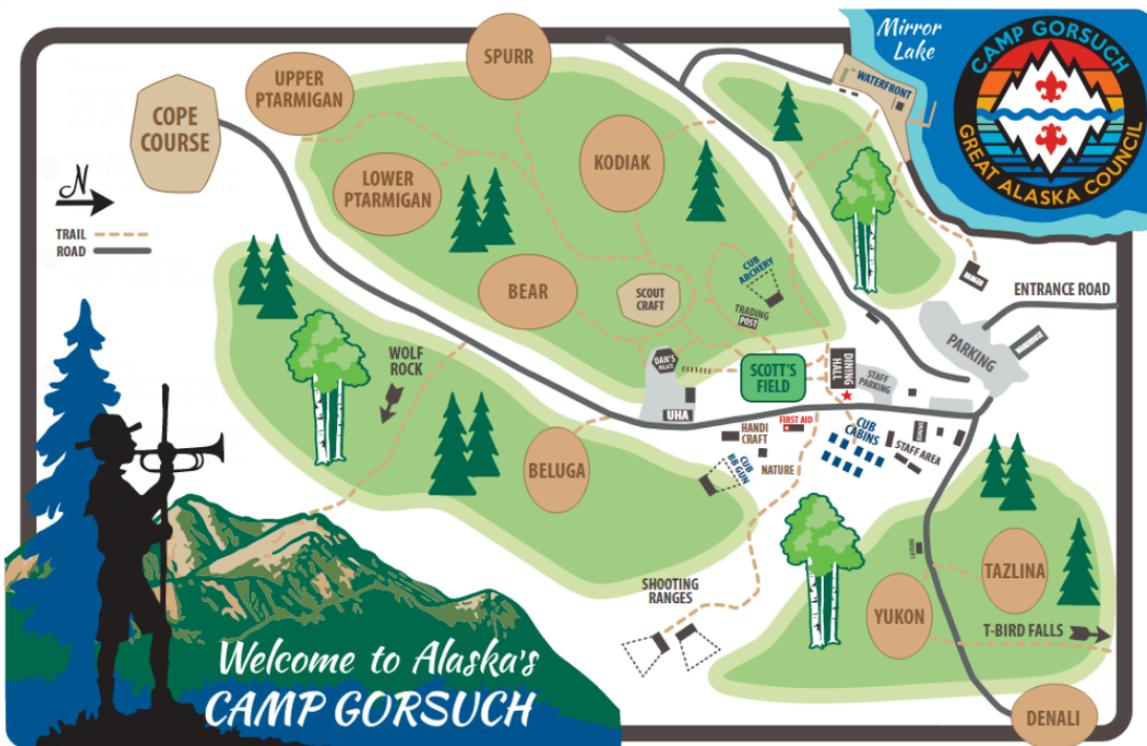
Week #1 -Scouts BSA	June 12 - 26
Week #2 - Scouts BSA	June 28 - July 3

Camp Location

Camp Gorsuch is located halfway between Anchorage and Wasilla off the Glenn Highway off the Mirror Lake exit.

Camp Address

Scout's Name
Troop Number
Camp Gorsuch
22700 Camp Gorsuch Road
Chugiak, AK 99567



2026 Weekly Schedule

TIMES	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday				
6:45		Polar Bear Swim - Thursday Only								
7:45		Morning Flag Ceremony								
8:00		Breakfast								
9:00		Session One (Monday – Thursday 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.)				Merit Badge Make-up/ Open Areas				
10:00		Session Two (Monday – Thursday 10:30 – 11:45								
11:00										
12:00		Lunch								
1:00	Check-In (1:00 – 4:00 p.m.)	SPL/Scoutmaster Meeting								
1:30		Free Time				Be Prepared Relay				
2:00		Session Three (Monday – Thursday 2:00 – 3:15 p.m.)								
2:30										
3:30		Session Four (Monday – Thursday 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.)				Open Areas				
4:00	SM/SPL Meeting									
4:45	Evening Flags (4:50), Emergency Drill Sunday									
5:00	Dinner									
6:00	Vespers 6:30 – 7:00	Instructional Night/Open Areas 6:30 - 8:00	Gorsuch Game Night / Open Areas 6:30 - 8:00	Battle for Bear Mountain, Sourdough Run Families Welcome! 6:30 - 8:00	Service and Conservation Projects / Troop Night	Troop Time				
7:00	Opening Campfire 7:00 - 8:00									6:30 Campfire
7:30										
8:00										
8:45					Survival Campouts	Blue Card Pickup / Home				
9:00										
10:00	Lights Out									

Merit Badge Schedule

Camp Gorsuch BSA 2026					
	Merit Badges	9:00 AM	10:30 AM	2:00 PM	3:30 PM
Ecology	Environmental Science		YES	YES	
	Fish & Wildlife				YES
	Fly Fishing	YES			¹²
	Forestry			YES	
	Insect Study		YES		
	Nature	YES			
	Sustainability				
Scoutcraft	Geocaching		YES		
	Golf (Disc version)			YES	
	Pioneering			YES	YES
	Painting				YES
	Plumbing	YES			
	Wilderness Survival	YES	YES		
	Cheechako Trail	YES			
	Tenderfoot Skills	YES			
	2nd Class Skills		YES		
	1st Class Skills			YES	
	Silver Sourdough				YES
Ranges	Archery	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Rifle (Cartridge)	YES	YES		
	Shotgun			YES	YES

Handicraft	Art		YES		
	Basketry		YES		
	Chess			YES	
	Game Design				YES
	Indian Lore	YES			
	Inventing				YES
	Leatherwork	YES			
	Moviemaking	YES			
	Signs, Signals & Codes				Yes
	Theater			YES	
	Welding	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Woodcarving			YES	
Aquatics	Canoeing	YES			
	Kayaking	YES			
	Lifesaving		YES		
	Motorboating				YES
	Rowing		YES		
	Small Boat Sailing			YES	YES
	Swimming			YES	
	Activity: Mile Swim	Arranged upon request			
	Activity: Stand Up Paddleboarding	Evening Activity			
Personal	First Aid	YES			
Safety	Search & Rescue			YES	YES
C.O.P.E.	Climbing	YES	YES		
	C.O.P.E.			YES	

Special Notes

Some merit badges will not be completed at camp.

All Aquatics Merit Badges	Must be classified as swimmers at Camp Gorsuch to participate in aquatics merit badges. Swim test must be taken and passed on Sunday after you arrive, or you will be dropped from the class.
Lifesaving	Requirement 2a Swimming MB must be completed before arrival at camp. 2b will be conducted at camp - Swim continuously for 400 yards. Please review the requirements for the 400 yard swim.
Motorboating	\$10.00 supply fee
Small Boat Sailing	\$5.00 supply fee
Fly Fishing	\$10.00 supply fee
Archery	\$7.00 supply fee
Rifle (cartridge)	\$10.00 supply fee
Shotgun	\$15.00 supply fee / Must have already completed the Rifle Merit Badge
First Aid	Must be First Class.
Climbing	\$10.00 supply fee / Minimum Age 13
COPE	\$30.00 supply fee / Minimum Age 13
Silver Sourdough	Minimum Age 14
Wilderness Survival	Requirement 5 not completed at camp unless you bring a prepared survival kit / Minimum Age 12
Handicraft Merit Badges	Fee
Welding	\$30.00 supply fee / Minimum Age 13

Camp Gorsuch Program

Camp Gorsuch is proud of its diversified and exciting program. The following information will help you become familiar with our program. Take some time to review in detail what is going on and what is new for 2022!

Senior Patrol Leaders

The SPL are the leaders of the Troop. It is essential for each Troop to have one elected. SPL meetings are held daily and are designed to be an opportunity for the troops to receive updates on the events or the schedule, and to fill out the duty roster with the Program Director. During these meetings you can bring up questions or concerns your Troop may have.

Camp Staff

Young men and women, ages 15 and above by the time camp starts are eligible to apply for a camp staff position. Applications for camp staff positions may be obtained at the Great Alaska Council Service Center or online at scoutingalaska.org/camping. Compensation is a stipend based on position and experience. Room and board are provided for camp staff. Staff in Training (S.I.T.) are 14-year-old Scouts who wish to learn about Staff positions at camp. Those selected to participate in the S.I.T. program will receive room and board at no cost. The minimum time for a S.I.T. to be at camp is staff week and one week of camp. The maximum is staff week and two weeks of camp.

Uniforms:

We encourage your Scouts to wear full uniforms for evening flag ceremonies each day, as well as the opening and closing campfire. Through the day, encourage them to wear Scout short/pants and some Scout related shirt/t-shirt. The uniform is an important part of the Scouting program.

Swim Test

All Scouts and Scouters that wish to use the waterfront in any manner will be required to take a swim test at summer camp. Due to the differences between swimming in a pool and swimming in a natural body of water it is important that the Waterfront staff be able to evaluate a Scout's swimming ability in the water that they will be swimming in at camp.

Cheechako Trail - First-Year Scout Program

The Cheechako Trail program is designed for those campers who are new to Boy Scouting. It helps new Scouts get oriented to camp, make friends, and learn the skills needed for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class Ranks.

Adult leaders are encouraged to help on the Cheechako Trail. The more leaders the better! At the end of the week, Scoutmasters will be provided with forms

indicating those skills which were satisfactorily shown to the instructor. Nothing is signed in the BSA Handbook. The Scoutmaster may wish to review skills before signing the book.

Cheechakos can also spend time working on other merit badges. They also earn Firem'n Chit, Totin' Chip and the Paul Bunyan Woodsman Award

Evening Activities

There will be special activities and merit badges offered each night at camp. Campers can participate in these activities from 6:00-9:00 PM. Check the schedule for information on which activities will be offered at night.

Merit Badge Signup

Signup will be available May 1, 2024. Your summer camp coordinator will receive an email with instructions and a password. Units must be paid in full to sign up for merit badges. It will be an online process through the same system that was used to register for camp.

During camp there will be an opportunity to make last minute changes to merit badge schedules. **Some class sizes will be limited due to National Standards or limited physical equipment support. We do our best to try to accommodate all Scouts needs.**

Certain merit badges have costs that are over and above those covered by the camp fee. Make sure Scouts are prepared to cover any costs of their merit badges.

Age Requirements

National Standards require each camp to have programs for older Scouts. In order to meet this requirement, certain age restrictions have been set for some programs. These programs were chosen based on the size, ability and experience of certain age groups. **Please do not ask for waivers on age requirements.**

Be a Guest Merit Badge Counselor

Scout Leaders are encouraged to help teach specific merit badges. If you are going to be at camp for a week and would like to teach a special Merit Badge during your stay that isn't offered by the camp please contact the Camp Director to coordinate.

Project COPE & Climbing Tower

Cope and Climbing will be offered this year! We look forward to seeing your Scouts test themselves with this wonderful opportunity for team building and personal growth,

Leave No Trace

All of the camp properties of the Great Alaska Council teach and practice the principles of Leave No Trace. Leaders and Scouts are encouraged to take advantage of the training opportunities that are offered at each camp.

Pre-Camp Meetings

Pre-Camp Meetings will be scheduled during the spring for each of the camp programs. Watch for notices through e-Trail Talk.

Trading Post

Spending money is recommended (between \$50 and \$75) since Camp Gorsuch maintains a well stocked trading post. Hours will be posted, usually the trading post is open throughout the day and evening except during flag ceremonies, meal hours, and campfires. Items such as craft kits, patches, and items for advancement sessions (merit badge pamphlets, handbooks, etc.) Assorted snacks are also available.

What to Bring to Camp Gorsuch

Personal equipment should be packed in a pack, suitcase, or duffel. It is helpful if the Scout has their name in their clothing and on their gear. It makes returning lost items much easier. **The Great Alaska Council is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, or broken at camp.**

Clothing

Field Uniform
OA Sash
Sweater or Jacket
Rain Gear
Swim Trunks
T-shirts
Long and Short Pants
Hat
Underwear
Socks
Tennis Shoes
Hiking Boots
Sunglasses

Bedding

Sleeping Bag/Pillow
Sleeping Pad

Toiletries

Toothbrush/ Toothpaste
Wash Cloth/Towel
Soap/Shampoo Deodorant
Comb/Brush
Sunscreen
Insect Repellant

Additional Items

Personal First Aid Kit
Pocket Knife
Water Bottle
Camera
Fishing Gear (*optional*)
Work gloves
Spending Money
Religious material
Bicycles w/helmets
Day Pack

Advancement Gear

Scout Handbook*
Notebook
Pens and Pencils*
Merit Badge Books*
Merit Badge work already completed

Orienteering:

Compass (*available to purchase in trading post*)

COPE/Climbing, Lifesaving MBs:

Blue Jeans
Long sleeve button-up shirt

Troop Gear

Flags
Patrol Flags
Troop First Aid Kit
Alarm Clock
Rope or Binders Twine
Merit Badge Books Scoutmaster's Handbook
Program Reference Materials Field Book
Patrol Leaders Handbook
Dining Fly, poles, and rope
Shovel/Rake/Broom
Tools as needed
Gear Tent/ Shelter

Medical Forms for each Scout & Leader

Nanuk Lodge

Order of the Arrow

The Order of the Arrow is Scouting's Brotherhood of Honor Campers. Nanuk Lodge has been an integral part of Camp Gorsuch history.

The purpose of the Order of the Arrow is:

To recognize those who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives and through that recognition cause others to conduct themselves in a way that warrants similar recognition.

Promote camping, responsible outdoor adventure, and environmental stewardship as essential components of every Scout's experience, in the unit, year-round, and in summer camp.

Develop leaders with the willingness, character, spirit, and ability to advance the activities of their units, our Brotherhood, Scouting, and ultimately our nation.

To crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.

The Order of the Arrow is a unique organization in that both members and nonmembers must elect its membership. To be elected, a Scout must be First Class or above and be an active, registered member of a BSA troop or team. After registration with a troop or team, have experienced fifteen days and nights of Boy Scout camping during the two-year period prior to the election. The fifteen days and nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of six consecutive days and five nights of resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of Scouting America. The balance of the camping must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps.

Fifty percent of the registered members of the Troop must be present at the election. The unit committee may nominate only one adult, if the unit elected at least one youth. If the unit has more than 50 registered members, the unit committee may nominate two adults each year. Adult applications must be turned in to Council Service Center by May 14.

Remember that, if your unit desires to hold elections during camp, official OA election teams must do unit OA elections! Elections must be done by Tuesday night to be called-out at the Friday night campfire.

While a call-out may be held at the Spring Camporee, Scouts can be called-out at Camp Gorsuch. The call-outs will be held on Friday.

BROTHERHOOD CONVERSION OPPORTUNITIES

The Brotherhood is for Order of the Arrow members who have been Arrowmen for at least 10 months and meet certain other requirements. Nanuk Lodge will conduct a Brotherhood Ceremony for qualifying Arrowmen. Check with the OA Camp Chief to find out time and information.

For more information concerning the Order of the Arrow or Nanuk Lodge at www.scoutingalaska.org/oa or www.nanuk355.com

Bear Aware

Gear Shelter

Smellables, food, packs, and day clothes are stored outside of tents. Gear should nev-er be stored in tents or areas where someone sleeps. Bears enjoy investigating gear and the smells that are within. As part of our bear and wildlife procedures we require that troops store their gear in one central location in their campsites. Troops should bring a pop up shelter or tent to keep gear out of the elements.

Only items in tents:

- sleeping bags
- sleeping pads
- sleeping clothes
- pillows

Bear boxes are kept away from tent pads.

Travel with a buddy at all times!

Dispose of trash properly & lock the lid.

Be tree safe. Only use established toilets or latrines.

Never run from a bear.

Transient bear:

- Move out of his way.
- Report sighting to staff.

Local bear and returning bears:

- Move out of the bear's path.
- Stay in a group.
- If the bear causes an issue, deter the bear with loud noise.
- Contact staff immediately.

Repeat offender bear:

- Deter bear from camp with loud noise.
- Stay in a group.
- Contact staff immediately.

Only if necessary, the APD or ADFG will be contacted to take appropriate measures to remove the bear.

For the complete Council Bear Policy, please see the Council website.



Find us on
Facebook

3117 Patterson St. Anchorage, AK 99504

Register at scoutingalaska.org