

Camp Shenandoah



*Leader's &
Parent's Guide*

Winter 2026



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This Leader Guide is a living document and may be updated as details are refined or new information becomes available. The Camp Shenandoah Administration may adjust program elements as needed to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, staff, and the Virginia Headwaters Council. For the latest version of the Winter Camp Leader Guide, please visit <https://scoutingevent.com/763-wintercamp26>.

Welcome to Camp Shenandoah

Scouts and Scouters,

Welcome to the very first Winter Camp at Camp Shenandoah! We are thrilled to have you join us as we launch a brand-new tradition of cold-weather adventure and camaraderie.

This inaugural Winter Camp is more than just a new season — it's a new chapter. Our goal remains the same: to deliver a Camper First experience, where Scouts find a home at camp and grow in character, so that they live the values of the Scout Oath and Law throughout their lives. Winter brings fresh opportunities to explore Scouting from a different angle — from unique merit badges and cold-weather skills to themed activities and unforgettable moments you can't get in July.

Winter at Shenandoah also brings new challenges — and that's part of the adventure! Some campsites do not have running water, and there are no shower houses open during the cold months. But that's exactly what makes Winter Camp special: a chance to test your resourcefulness, teamwork, and Scout spirit in the elements. Water will be available at key locations around camp, and our staff will ensure every unit stays comfortable, prepared, and hydrated throughout the weekend.

Our dedicated staff is here to guide you through it all — teaching, mentoring, and cheering you on as you embrace the challenges and joys of winter Scouting. Whether you're earning new badges, trying a frosty outdoor adventure, or warming up with friends in the dining hall, we hope this weekend sparks new traditions and builds memories that last long after the snow melts.

Thank you for being part of this milestone moment. Together, we're creating something special — a winter tradition that will grow and evolve for years to come. Until then, bundle up, be bold, and get ready to discover Camp Shenandoah like you've never seen it before.

Yours in Scouting,

The Camp Shenandoah Staff

Contact Us

Virginia Headwaters Council

Council Office Weekdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Phone 540-943-6675
Physical Address 617 Greenville Avenue
 Staunton, VA 24401

Registration Questions or Assistance

Robert Clemmer, Director of Camping
(540) 292-2391
robert.clemmer@scouting.org

Tracey Stakem, VP of Program
tgstakem@gmail.com

Terry Michael
terry.michael@scouting.org

Camp Shenandoah Information

Physical Address 222 Boy Scout Lane
 Swoope, VA 24479

Key Dates:

Aug 26, 2025

Deposit Open for VAHC Units Only

Sept 15, 2025

Deposit Open for Out of Council Units

Oct 15, 2025

Merit Badge Guide Released

Oct 30, 2025

Merit Badge Selection Opens (once paid in full)

Jan 16-19, 2026

WINTERCAMP

Rates:

Early Bird by Oct 31

- Youth Participant- \$80
- Adult Participant- \$35

Regular Nov 1

- Youth Participant- \$100
- Adult Participant- \$50

Late Dec 15

- Youth Participant- \$125
- Adult Participant- \$65



Registration

Reserve Your Space

A \$100 Deposit Fee is collected at time of your registration. You may:

- [Self-register your troop on Black Pug](#)

During your initial deposit, enter the number of youth and adults you anticipate bringing to camp and request campsites. You may adjust these numbers as necessary and begin entering names and selecting sessions as of Oct 30, 2025. After this date, payment must be received to secure slots for your Scouts.

Provisional Scouts (Scouts not attending with their unit) register in the same manner.

Provisional Scouts

Scouts who are unable to attend camp with their unit are invited to stay as a Provisional (Provo) Camper. Scouts are placed with a host unit approved by our Camp Director and the unit's leader. Scouts craft their own schedule and stay with the host troop, participating in all camp activities. Scouts register in Black Pug. Provisional Scouts must bring a complete Annual Health Record and follow check-in procedures.



Adult Registration

Each unit must always have a minimum of two registered adults at Camp. This includes male and female “linked” units; each must have a minimum two adults registered in their unit.

Black Pug Online Registration

Camp Shenandoah uses Black Pug for all online registrations, session selections, rosters, and payments. You may change a Scout's schedule in Black Pug up to one week prior to your unit's arrival. At this point, if a desired Merit Badge is not displayed for a specific session time, it is already full and therefore unavailable.

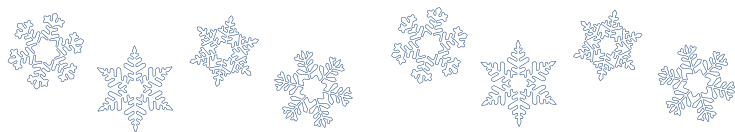
Payments

Most units find paying online at Black Pug Checkout with a credit/debit card to be the most convenient way to secure slots for Scouts. Names and sessions in your cart are not confirmed until payment is made. Units may also pay over the phone by calling the Council Office. There is a 3% service fee for online or phone payments. Units can also mail a check to the Virginia Headwaters Council Office, checks made payable to the Virginia Headwaters Council.

Session Availability

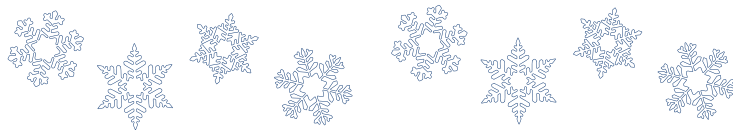
All available Merit Badges are displayed for each Scout while selecting Merit Badges in Black Pug.

Several Merit Badge sessions have a “requested troop limit,” offering the maximum number of troops to access as many Merit Badge sessions as possible. Session size availability is dictated for safety. Camp Shenandoah Administration reserves the right to drop Scouts from a session if the unit exceeds the requested troop limit.



Refunds

Units may reduce numbers without penalty until Dec 20, 2025. After Dec 20, refunds occur only in the event of documented illness or injury prohibiting attendance, family military transfer/deployment, or death of an immediate family member. Email refund requests to the Camp Director. Refunds are calculated at 70% of fees paid and are refunded after January 30, 2026. We are unable to issue a refund to Scouts who decide they no longer want to attend Camp or remain in the Scouting program.



Health & Safety

Medical Form

All guests staying at Camp Shenandoah are required by BSA policy to present a current Annual Health and Medical Records (AHMR) form. For most, this includes Parts A, B, & C and includes a physical examination. For those staying at camp for less than 72 hours, only Parts A & B are needed. An incomplete or missing AHMR will require no participation until a completed form is presented to the Health Officer.

There are no exceptions to this rule. We request you bring alphabetized AHMR forms as this greatly expedites review. Our Health Officer securely retains forms in the Health Lodge and returns form at Monday check-out.



Medications

Prior to arrival at camp, units fill out the Medical Responsibility Form for each unit member taking medication. Use one form for each camper. The medication dosage schedule should be recorded. The unit leader should be prepared to show these forms at check-in to the Camp Health Officer and update them throughout the unit's stay at camp. Prescription medication must be in the original container with the name, strength, dose, and frequency marked on the container. Any over-the-counter medications brought with camper(s) must be labeled clearly and listed on the BSA Health Forms. Generally, all medication will be dispensed in the unit area by a responsible adult leader.

Medication must be kept in a locked box. Medication requiring refrigeration or injection is securely kept in the Health Lodge and is dispensed only by the Health Officer or unit leader. It remains the responsibility of the unit leader to assure that the Scout is present at the appropriate times for dispensing. If the BSA AHMR Form indicates that an individual must have an inhaler, EpiPen® or similar medical device, the Health Officer must confirm that the individual has the required item(s) in their possession. If the items are not in possession of the camper or leader, they must either obtain the items indicated on the form or be required to leave camp.

Special Assistance Request

To help us provide you with the best possible experience, this form is requested at least two weeks before your arrival. This form is also used to let us know of any allergies or dietary restrictions. Additional information for special food and dietary requests is in Meals & Food Service within this guide.

Cold Camper

The Staff Lounge, Maintenance, and the Nature Center have wood stoves for cold campers to warm up. Propane heaters will also be located in the dining hall and other program areas.

Health Lodge

The Camp Health Lodge is staffed 24 hours a day by qualified health personnel who handle all minor injuries, scrapes and bruises, etc. Any person requiring care outside of the scope of the Health Lodge will be referred to urgent care or the emergency room at Augusta Health in Fishersville, VA. For insurance purposes and for the health and safety of all participants, all accidents and illnesses, must be reported to the Health Lodge and recorded. We will have an EMT at camp all weekend. The EMT will be at the First Aid Lodge or will have a radio. Any changes will be announced at check-in. All injuries must be reported to the First Aid Lodge.

Trips to Doctor or Hospital

It is the responsibility of the unit leadership to provide transportation for the unit member(s) requiring travel to or from a doctor or a hospital, unless the Health Officer determines that emergency transport is necessary. One adult leader from the unit, and one additional adult, will accompany the unit member requiring services and is asked to carry insurance forms. They must obtain the Scout's health and medical form from the Health Lodge before going to the doctor or hospital. Parents or guardians will be notified by the Camp Director immediately of any serious illness or injury. If parents will not be at home while the Scout is at camp, have them advise the unit how they can be contacted. The Camp Medical Officer must clear all cases requiring outside medical care. Please note Urgent Care centers in Staunton or Waynesboro are generally not open after 8:00 p.m., therefore treatment should be obtained at the Emergency Department of Augusta Health in Fishersville, VA. Note: specific COVID-19 protocols may be in place, per the Virginia Department of Health.

Merit Badges & Sessions

Scouts should come to Camp with a familiarity of the subjects they will be learning about for the week. We urge unit leadership to be aware:

Block Schedules

Merit Badge sessions are offered Saturday through Sunday in two block sessions. Monday features morning Merit Badges in one block sessions.

Session Selection

Units may enter as many youths and adults they plan to bring at any time. Classes are not confirmed until fees are paid and you check out your cart. We recommend units add numbers as they receive payment so those that pay the unit can select their classes right away. Units may register names and select sessions after Oct 30, 2026 once a scout is paid in full.

	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
AM BLOCK	BLOCK A (PART 1)	BLOCK A (PART 2)	BLOCK C
PM BLOCK	BLOCK B (PART 1)	BLOCK B (PART 2)	

BLOCK A

SEWING
SURVEYING
PHOTOGRAPHY
WILDERNESS SURVIVAL
HOME REPAIR
WEATHER
BUGLING
PROGRAMMING

BLOCK C

CRIME PREVENTION/ FINGERPRINTING
FIRE SAFETY
LAW
AMERICAN BUSINESS
CHESS

BLOCK B

SCULPTURE
PHYSICS
MOVIEMAKING
GEOCACHING
AUTOMOTIVE MAINTENANCE
WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT
MUSIC
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Happy Friday

Driving to Camp Shenandoah

A Scout is Courteous — and Prepared! As you make your way to Camp Shenandoah for Winter Camp, please plan ahead for cold-weather travel conditions. After exiting I-81, the roads become progressively narrower and more rural. Follow the green “Camp Shenandoah B.S.A.” signs to guide your way. Swoope is a small farming community, so remain alert for oncoming traffic, farm equipment, and possible icy patches — especially on shaded or gravel sections.

Boy Scout Lane is maintained during the winter but may still have snow or slush. Please reduce your speed and do not exceed 25 mph. All vehicles should have full fuel tanks and winter supplies (such as blankets, water, and a scraper) before leaving the interstate.

Upon arrival, staff and your Unit Guide will greet you at the gate. Parking for most vehicles is in our main lot. One vehicle with a trailer may proceed into camp’s interior parking loop to unload gear. All camp roads remain one-way and are subject to a 5 mph speed limit — use extra caution if snow or ice is present.

Friday Check In

Units are greeted by their Unit Guide, a member of the Camp Shenandoah staff. The Senior Patrol Leader and Unit Guide report to the campsite to set camp and settle in. The Scoutmaster reports to the check-in tables beside the Camp Office. Units must bring the following:

- All paperwork such as Special Assistance Requests, Youth Leaving Camp Early, etc.
- Printed final roster from Black Pug
- Registration fees confirmation and any last-minute changes

Camp Tour

New troops to Camp Shenandoah will be offered a camp tour, showing you program areas, Dining Hall, Trading Post, Admin and Health Lodge. If you’ve previously been with us and would like a refresher, just let your Unit Guide know.

More Than Merit Badges

Festival of Gates

The Festival of Gates invites each troop to showcase its pioneering skills by constructing a free-standing gateway along the perimeter of the parade field. This activity emphasizes both craftsmanship and creativity, with a special focus on integrating a lighting element into each design.

Gateways should be structurally sound, self-supporting, and clearly marked with the troop's number or name. All lighting must be battery-powered or otherwise self-contained and designed for safe outdoor use. Troops are encouraged to bring their own extension cords, lighting elements, and decorations to ensure their gateway is fully illuminated and ready for the evening event.

Schedule:

- Friday & Saturday: Construction Period – Troops may begin work on their gateways at any time after arrival on Friday and continue through Saturday afternoon.
- Saturday, 8:00 PM: Illumination Ceremony – gather on the parade field as the gateways are simultaneously lit, transforming the space into an impressive nighttime display and marking a highlight of the Winter Camp program.

Mountaineer Program

The Mountaineer Program is an immersive outdoor skills experience that challenges Scouts to live like early frontier explorers while sharpening essential wilderness skills. Participants will rotate through hands-on sessions including:

Muzzleloading
Blacksmithing
Orienteering

The program features an overnight in an improvised shelter built by the participants, putting their knowledge and resourcefulness to the test.

Scouts should be prepared for extended time outdoors and bring appropriate clothing and gear for cold weather and primitive camping. The Mountaineer Program is best suited for older Scouts who are ready for an added challenge.

Dining Hall & Meals

Assembly

Units assemble 15 minutes prior to each meal on the Parade Field. Please be prompt as this is when we hold flag ceremonies, share announcements, and give thanks with grace for each meal. Morning assembly at 7:45 a.m. and evening assembly at 5:30 p.m.

Meals

Tables will be assigned to units during the opening day tour. The menu is posted in the Dining Hall and at your campsite. Meals are served by staff as you enter the Dining Hall. Seconds may be offered after everyone is served.

Lunch on Monday will be a Grab and Go Lunch. Troops will grab their meal from the Dining Hall before departing.

The menu is posted in the Dining Hall and at your campsite. Please remain seated in the Dining Hall for a fun song and announcements before dismissal from the Dining Hall Steward.

Table Waiters

Camp Shenandoah uses a “waiter” system in each unit to give Scouts an opportunity to learn and practice sanitary mealtime habits. Each unit is asked to send two waiters per table to each meal. Table Waiters should report to the Kitchen 15 minutes before meals. Responsibilities include setting tables, wiping down tables, sweeping after meals. The Dining Hall Steward dismisses table waiters after the completion of their duties following the meal.

Special Requests

We strive to accommodate the many allergies and other dietary restrictions. It is very important you let us know in advance using our [Special Assistance Request form](#).

We meet typical dietary needs but cannot create individual meals for guests with special lifestyles or picky eaters.

Those with special needs are encouraged to provide any specialty food to supplement our menu. These should be individually boxed, labeled with name and unit number. Speak with our kitchen staff for instructions as they will cheerfully store dry, refrigerated or frozen goods for you.

Policies & Services

Camp Sites

Each campsite can accommodate up to 40 guests and includes a latrine. Troops should plan to bring and use their own tents and sleeping arrangements for Winter Camp. We ask that, to the extent possible, participants share tents to help manage space within the site.

Please note that not all campsites have water available during the winter months. Water is shut off to most of camp, including the Showerhouse, to prevent pipe damage and costly repairs. Water will be available at Stewart, Gilkeson, the outside main gate, and at the water buffalos located near the Dining Hall.

Health Lodge

The Camp Health Lodge is staffed 24 hours a day by qualified health personnel who handle all minor injuries, scrapes and bruises, etc. Any person requiring care outside of the scope of the Health Lodge will be referred to urgent care or the emergency room at Augusta Health in Fishersville, VA. For insurance purposes and for the health and safety of all participants, all accidents and illnesses, must be reported to the Health Lodge and recorded.

Feminine Hygiene

Female scouts and scouters are encouraged to bring feminine hygiene products to camp even if they are not expecting their menstrual cycle to start. No matter how consistent a female's cycle may be normally, camping in the woods can affect timing and flow. Unused feminine hygiene products should be stored on the troop trailer or secured with other smellable items such as food and toiletries and not in the tents. Used products can be disposed of in the trash can provided in the latrine (NOT in the latrine) and collected each night during latrine duty for disposal in the camp dumpster.

Buddy System

The buddy system is a safety measure for all Scouting activities. Buddies should know and be comfortable with each other. Self-selection with no more than two years age or significant differences in maturity should be strongly encouraged. When necessary, a buddy team may consist of three Scouts and is required for mixed gender buddies. No youth should be forced into or made to feel uncomfortable by a buddy assignment. Schedules for scouts should reflect buddy assignments. It is discouraged that a Scout take a class by themselves.

Power Generators & CPAP Machines

If someone has a special need, including the use of a CPAP machine, please contact the Camp Director at least one week prior to your arrival at Camp, and we will do our best to accommodate. There are no electrical outlets in campsites. Many CPAP users utilize a battery powered machine that is easily recharged at the Maintenance Building or the STEM shelter. Please ask to speak with our Camp Director if someone will need a daytime charging outlet.

Fire Safety & 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 maintenance area. Please enforce our NO Flames in Tents policy by showing Scouts the signage. Only flashlights, headlights and battery lanterns are to be used in tents.

Vehicles & Trailers

One trailer per unit may be parked in campsites. It must be disconnected from the tow vehicle and the tow vehicle must return to the camp parking lot. Trailer wheels must be chocked, and the tongue must be secured on a block or stand such that the trailer is safe, secure and does not block roads or trails. No vehicles may remain in campsites.

Youth Leaving Camp Early

We understand a prior commitment may require a Scout to temporarily leave camp. Should you know this in advance, please prepare our Youth Leaving Camp Early Release Authorization Form. Using this form, the Scout's parent(s) or legal guardian must notify the Camp Administration in writing that a Scout may have an interrupted or shortened stay at Camp Shenandoah. This written statement must include the departure information and return information if the Scout is going to return. It must also detail who is authorized to pick up the youth. Both parent and Scout leader in charge must sign the release form.

Leader Information

Orientation

Unit leaders and Senior Patrol Leaders are asked to attend our orientation meeting on Friday evening. Introductions, important information, and any schedule changes are shared at this gathering.

Staying Connected

Cell connectivity in camp is spotty and varies by location. We understand some leaders may need to have a more reliable Wi-Fi connection and can be accessed by inquiring at the Admin office.

Camp Rules

Camp Shenandoah operates under the Scout Oath and Scout Law. For additional safety of campers and staff, the following is a list of important items of note:

- Closed-toed shoes are always worn. Scouts and Scouters may wear shower shoes/water shoes/sandals inside the shower house and waterfront area only. Scouts and Scouters wear closed-toed shoes as they travel to those locations.
- Fireworks are prohibited.
- Alcohol is prohibited.
- Tobacco products are used only in designated areas.

Ranger Corps

The Ranger Corps is a team of dedicated volunteers who help maintain and improve Camp Shenandoah. Leaders with a couple spare hours and a skill are always welcomed to visit with our Ranger Corps.

Camp Siren

In the event the camp emergency alert siren is heard, everyone is to immediately report to the Parade Field, lining up at your troop's position on the field behind the SPL. The SPL and one leader then report to camp leadership at the flagpoles when all youth and adults are present.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST FOR SCOUTS

Winter Camp Packing List

- Completed and signed medical form
- Complete Scout uniform
- Comfortable, weather-appropriate shoes or boots (insulated and waterproof recommended) – Flip flops are only allowed in the shower
- Pocketknife
- Wallet/money (\$50–\$75 for Trading Post)
- Cold-weather sleeping bag or sleeping system rated for low temperatures
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Scout handbook
- Notebook with pencils/pens
- Merit badge books and any pre-requisite work
- T-shirts or base layers – Scout appropriate
- Thermal base layers (top and bottom)
- Warm pants (avoid jeans for cold overnight use)
- Wool or synthetic socks (enough for the week, plus extras)
- Warm hat, gloves, and scarf or neck gaiter
- Heavy jacket or parka
- Rain gear or waterproof outer shell
- Personal hygiene products (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc.)
- Sneakers or camp shoes (for indoor use)
- Washcloth and towel
- Comb/brush
- Water bottle – hydration is important even in cold weather!
- Insulated sleeping pad or foam mat
- Extra blankets
- Hand and foot warmers
- Gaiters or snow pants (if snow is possible)
- Camp chair for outdoor programs
- Optional / Comfort Items
- Watch
- Camera
- Pillow
- Sunglasses
- Small first aid kit
- Scout Field Book
- Cord for clothesline
- Plastic ground cloth
- Ear plugs or noise-cancelling headphones
- Compression vest or weighted blanket
- Favorite fidget toy
- Prayer book or devotional material

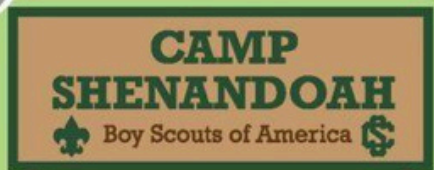
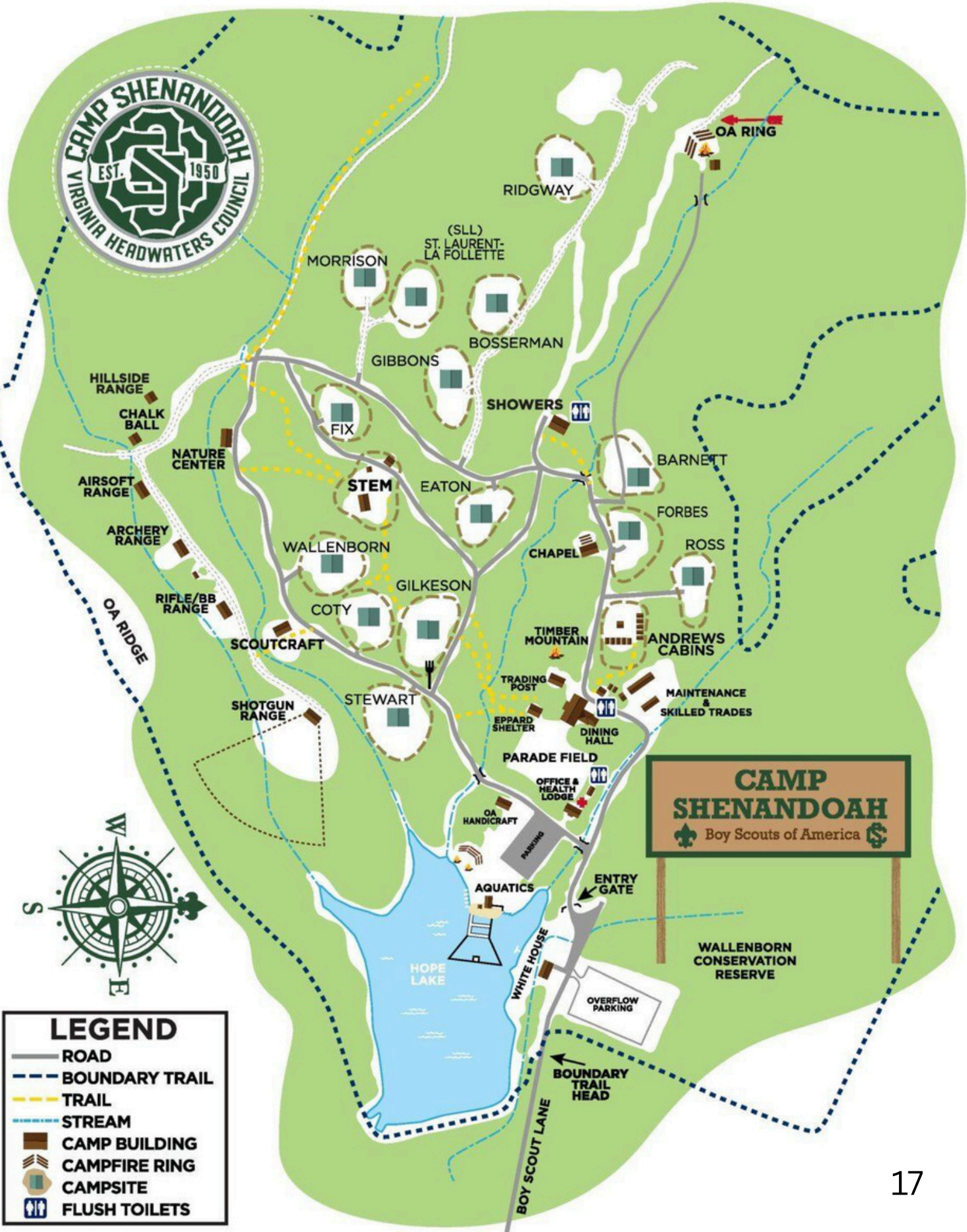
Extra items for Scouts participating in the Mountaineer Program or overnight shelter activity:

- Matches or fire starters in a waterproof container
- Plastic ground cloth or tarp
- Eating equipment – mess kit and utensils
- Extra water bottle
- Additional warm clothing layers (for sleeping in improvised shelters)

Additional Notes:

Label all personal items (including clothing and gear) with the Scout's name and troop number to help with lost and found.

Conditions in January can be unpredictable. Scouts should be prepared for cold nights, wet weather, and time outdoors in variable conditions.



LEGEND

- ROAD
- BOUNDARY TRAIL
- TRAIL
- STREAM
- CAMP BUILDING
- CAMPFIRE RING
- CAMPSITE
- FLUSH TOILETS