

PHILMONT AMBASSADOR UPDATE

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SERVING BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD

Summer 2021

Summer Success Relies on COVID Compliance

All Philmont camping and PTC participants must be vaccinated or have a recent negative COVID test.

Philmont Scout Ranch is pleased to announce that the state of New Mexico is in support of our operations and programming for this summer. This support falls within the New Mexico Public Health Order, its "Reopen New Mexico COVID-Safe Practices: Overnight Youth Camps," and the CDC's *Guidance for Operating Youth and Summer Camps*.

This is exciting news. But also brings with it the highest degree of responsibility for each individual setting foot on the property. There is a possibility for serious consequences if our mitigation efforts fail to prevent significant spread – consequences to both the health of those affected and in the summer op-

erations of Philmont. To be clear, any event leading to significant spread, or multiple smaller events, could result in forced shutdown of our operations, for a short period of time, or the entire summer.

Philmont Scout Ranch and the Boy Scouts of America strongly recommend everyone eligible to be vaccinated for COVID-19 upon consultation and the recommendation of your health care provider.

To ensure that anyone who is positive and contagious for the COVID-10 virus stays at home and that they do not have close contact with other cohort (crew) members during travel, we are requiring either a copy of a vaccination card completed 14 days or more prior to arrival at Philmont OR documented proof of a negative test within 3-5 days, but no more than 7 days



"A Scout is Obedient" Infirmary staff are relying on everyone to adhere to New Mexico's and Philmont's COVID prevention requirements to ensure a safe summer for all.

upon arrival. While this does not guarantee that participants will not contract COVID-19 during travel, it does help crew leaders keep positive cases out of the

cohort before travel and gives individual participants an added layer of protection and confidence as they isolate and use travel safe practices before arriv-

ing at Philmont.

In collaboration with the State of New Mexico, Philmont Scout Ranch will conduct required periodic surveillance testing of both staff and crews.

We are updating our mitigation plans to reflect all the new requirements and the protocols from the state and the CDC. Philmont Scout Ranch will operate this summer, but must do so within these required protocols. Please bring your patience and understanding, particularly in Base Camp, as we provide a safe and healthy environment for our valued participants and staff.

Together, we believe that the collaboration between Philmont Scout Ranch, the State of New Mexico, and most importantly, the efforts of our participants, will guarantee a safe and healthy summer.

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Who's Who at Philmont

Lee Hughes- Director of Conservation

Duties at Philmont: I provide direction and guidance to all aspects of the Philmont Conservation Department. I supervise and work closely with the other full-time Conservation staff of a forester, field manager, and wildlife biologist to develop priorities for the management of trails, campsites, forests, wildlife, and conservation programs. We have a large seasonal staff



that runs the camper conservation program, environmental education for the ROCS, STEM, TCT, and OATC special treks, and a GIS shop that makes all the Philmont maps.

How did you come to work at Philmont? I first came to Philmont as a camper with my Troop from San Antonio, TX, in 1978. After a couple more crew treks and a Rayado trek later, I applied and got my first seasonal position at Fish Camp. I then spent 27 years as a wildlife biologist and GIS guy, mainly for the

state of Missouri, before having the good fortune to land the full-time Director of Conservation position in May of 2019.

Number of Years at Philmont: 7

Prior Positions at Philmont: Fish Camp PC and CD - 1986-87; Pueblano CD - 1988; Clear Creek CD - 1989; Beaubien CD - 1990; Backcountry Manager - 1991-92

Most Memorable Experiences at Philmont: Naming a single most memorable experience at Philmont is a tough one

- I was on the receiving end of a lightning strike while on Rayado at Clear Creek (which may explain a lot).

- My first Baldy summit as a youngster in '78.

- Serving as the first Backcountry Manager with a young upstart named Gene Schnell in 1991 and '92.

- Being offered the Conservation Director job and moving to the Ranch with my wife.

- And so many memories of rainbows, hail, starry nights, rainbows, and bears that they all blur together in a gallimaufry of joyful reminiscences.

Most Humorous Experience at Philmont: Again, too many funny memories to count, but I do remember driving to Fish Camp as a backcountry manager and having a crew flag me down for a ride like they always do. I asked them, "Now, why should I give you a ride?" And straight away one of the kids replied,

"Well, I for one have a headache!" You probably had to be there, but it was hilarious, and is a catchphrase to this day.

What do you like most about working at Philmont:

Two things, the country and the people. This landscape is magical, being at once familiar and constantly full of surprises. And the people are just as big a part. Not only do we all have a love of Philmont in common, but everyone striving to live up to the Scout Oath and Law makes for an experience above and beyond what you usually find outside of the Philmont universe.

What's your favorite off duty activity?: Fly fishing for northern New Mexico trout and playing guitar are my go-to activities. At separate times, of course.

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Autumn Adventures Await Ambassadors

Now is the time to sign up for one of the two special Philmont Ambassador Autumn Adventures. See article on page 2.



Philmont medical staff attend to a backcountry emergency.

More Unprepared Crews Unable to Complete Trek

"I was physically unprepared for the rigors of the Philmont backcountry."

"We thought we could get by without putting in the work."

"We should have done a lot more practice hikes and backpacking trips."

These are typical comments from Scouts and Scouters who were unable to finish their trek this summer.

Record numbers of people are being taken back to Base Camp instead of completing their expedition. While there are the usual types of physical injuries like sprained ankles that occur every year, many more suffer from inadequate physical conditioning that is required to finish a 35 to 82 mile backpacking trip.

During 2020 and much of

2021, COVID restrictions put limitations on camping trips and hikes that are the usual training practices. However, the rigors of a Trek remain the same.

Many trek participants find themselves too tired to go on. Some cannot handle the weight of their pack day after day. Others do not have the mental toughness for multiple days in the wilderness.

If a crew has only two adult advisors and one needs to come off the trail, the entire crew has to come off as well. This is strictly required by BSA policy. Philmont simply does not have the personnel to supply a second adult. One solution is to have three adults, or if a co-ed crew, two males and two females advisors, in the event one

(Unprepared continued on page 3)



Roger Hoyt, General Manager, explains how Ambassadors can best help Philmont through engaging with their council leadership to promote all the Ranch’s programs back home.

Philmont Leadership Provides Ambassadors Firsthand Intel

Leaders of Philmont’s major units briefed attendees of the recent Philmont Ambassador Seminars with important information about the Ranch’s operations. Roger Hoyt, General Manager, said that Ambassadors can help Philmont the most by getting to know about all the programs it offers and by developing a strong relationship with their top council leadership to find as many opportunities as possible to market, educate, promote and engage Scouts and leaders in all the Ranch’s activities.

Recruiting summer staff and scouts for Individual Opportunities should be an important focus for Ambassadors as well said Hoyt.

Danny Tucker, the new Philmont Training Center (PTC) Director, added, “The old Family Program and Silverado Program are gone. We now focus on family-orientated activities where everyone gets to do things together - and they love it! Because of the changes, attendees need to look at the information we send them ahead of time regarding schedules and pricing.” Unaccompanied children of PTC attendees will still be watched over by Philmont Counselors, but will do activities with other families.

Plan now to attend next years’ Seminars from June 19-25, 2022.

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Refresh and Update Your Philmont Display Now

Scouters everywhere are literally breathing a sigh of relief now that COVID restrictions are being lifted because vaccinations and masking requirements have effectively reduced the spread infections. This means that Ambassadors once again will be able to attend events where they can set up their Philmont display.

Before you do, though, now is a great time to take a look at your display that’s been gathering dust for over a year with an eye to refresh and update it.

Philmont prides itself on being a premier high adventure

destination that provides the best in Scouting. Does your display reflect that level of excellence? Have pictures and graphics gotten a bit tattered and worn over the years with wear and tear as you’ve transported your display from event to event? Does your display have the most current information on programs, costs and dates? Do your maps show the updated extent of the Ranch or the effects of the 2018 fire?

Set up your display at home and take a critical look to ensure everything is neat, crisp and up



A large Philmont map and banner add a lot of impact to your display. The ranch constantly changes, and the latest map shows the newest camps and trails.

Ambassador Profile

Ben Feril Makes the Shore to Summit Connection for Scouts

The heights of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains seem like a long way from the ocean but not for Philmont Ambassador Ben Feril. He is not only a retired Navy Captain but until June 1 he served as the Northeast Regional Sea Scout Commodore. He is now a member of the National Sea Scout Committee.

Ben first attended Philmont Training Center (PTC) in 2007 for the *Scouting in the Catholic Church* conference. He followed that up by participating in the pilot Philmont Leadership Challenge in 2008.

He had to take a pause in Scouting activities from 2008 to 2012 when he was an active duty Navy Captain assigned to the Pentagon as a Navy medical planner. Due to military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and deployment of the Navy’s two hospital ships to humanitarian missions, he was unable to do much in Scouting during this time period, no less return to PTC.

Once back in the states, though, he jumped back into the program. He attended the PTC Unit Commissioner Conference in 2013 and was course director for *Scouting in the Catholic*



Ben Feril knows that leadership skills acquired throughout all programs in Scouting, including Sea Scouts, make for a great Philmont experience.

Church in 2013 and 2016. Ben had such a memorable time at PTC that he wanted fellow Scouters and youth to experience the magic of God’s Country and so he became an Ambassador.

Ben has received numerous honors for his involvement with Scouting in the Catholic Church. He received the NE region Silver Antelope for his service to Sea Scouts as well as involvement in the Catholic Committee.

Ben is in the Del-Mar-Va Council which includes all of Delaware, the eastern shore of Maryland and the northern tip of Virginia. He’s the only Ambassador for the council and finds it a challenge to be at all the meetings going on. He has done presentations at council commissioner conferences, Scout meetings and at roundtables. He was also a Roundtable Commissioner.

Before COVID, he actively participated in events with his Philmont display. He enjoyed meeting interested individuals to talk about Philmont along with providing handouts and using his

computer lap top to show videos of Philmont. He appreciated having Scouts and Scouters stop by and share their stories of adventure and fun on a trek.

Now that restrictions are being eased, he is looking forward to doing presentations and Philmont exhibits once again.

Ben reflects, “The reason why we are all Ambassadors is because of the many great memories and friends we met at Philmont. There’s certainly magic at Cimarron which makes us think constantly about wanting to go back.

“When sharing your adventures with Scouters, Scouts and their parents, keep that ‘Philmont magic’ alive when talking to them. When doing so, I help them form their own vision of fun, adventure and personal growth while taking in the scenery on Baldy Mountain during sunset or with their families at a PTC tent city cobbler or ice cream social event.”

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Experience Colorful Philmont in Autumn

What happens at Philmont once all the summer scouts have gone home? Autumn Adventures! Fall is the favorite time for many Philmont devotees. “I remember the time that we were hiking through the autumn mists and came across an elk bugling on a hilltop. It was purely magical,” recalled one staffer.

Any group of Scouters of 8 to 12 people can schedule their own adventure during September and October. Even groups of Scouters with their families are possible. For only \$74/person per day they can experience the backcountry on their own route or choose from one of several focusing on a favorite activity like

climbing or fly fishing. Philmont will supply a Ranger, food, and any or all equipment for the trip. For more information, click this [link](#).

Ambassadors have their choice of two experiences. The Autumn Trek will cover 30 miles in the north country over 5 days. Trekkers will earn the coveted “Autumn Adventure” arrowhead patch. More information can be found by clicking [here for the Autumn Trek](#). A walking workshop based out of Baldy Town will treat you to spectacular views, day hikes, and in-depth visits with Philmont staff. Click [here for Walking Workshop](#) information. P2

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Focus on the Backcountry

Elusive Trout at Fish Camp Challenge Scouts

Elevation: 8554 ft.

Water: Purified Well

Originally known as Rayado Lodge, Fish Camp is the site of the three original hunting and fishing lodges of Waite Phillips. Fish camp is a popular program camp and is located in the South Country. The camp is interpretive, set in the year 1927, and program there includes lodge

tours, fly tying, and fly fishing. Fish Camp is notable as one of Waite Phillips's favorite spots on the Ranch according to his son Chope who used to visit every year until he passed away in 2015. The caretaker cabin at Fish Camp was completely restored in 2020. See the Winter 2021 Newsletter for more about the restoration.

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Catching a trout on the Rayado River with your own handmade fly is a highlight of many treks in the South Country.

Philmont Working to Restore Native Rio Grand Trout in South Ponil Watershed

In the history of modern human involvement in the West, creeks and lakes were often stocked with non-native fish species to provide better opportunities for fishermen. Philmont was no exception. In the South Ponil Creek, rainbow trout were introduced to supplement the native population of Rio Grande cutthroat trout. This introduction led to a reduction in the numbers of the native cutthroat trout and also created a crossbred species often referred to as “cutbow trout.” This put the native trout population at risk of total elimination as they were being out-competed by the non-native rainbow and brown trout. In the early 2010s the Cimarron Watershed Alliance and Philmont began creating a plan to rehabilitate the native trout population within the South Ponil Creek. The goals of the South Ponil Trout Restoration project were to:

- Improve the condition of the Ponil Creek watershed to meet water quality standards.
 - Maintain and/or improve normal hydrologic function to Ponil Creek and its tributaries.
 - Improve the habitat for the Rio Grande cutthroat trout, other native fish and aquatic species, along with terrestrial wildlife.
- These goals were accomplished through collaborations with private and governmental agencies, ground restoration treatments, education in the

Both Youth and Adults Need Fishing Licenses at Philmont

Philmont has incredible mountain streams in its backcountry with several types of trout. Great fishing opportunities are available depending on your itinerary. The Rayado and Agua Fria streams in the south, as well as the Cimarroncito Reservoir, offer excellent trout fishing. Though not large, these trout are wary and exciting to catch. Fly rods for catch and release fishing may be checked out at Hunting Lodge, Fish Camp, and Abreu. Philmont has youth special licenses that are \$2.00 and are good for the entire trek for anyone under the age of 18. Crews can purchase these in the backcountry at Abreu, Fish Camp, Hunting Lodge and Phillips Junction. Cash is required and the exact amount is encouraged. Adult fishing licenses can be purchased online from onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us. They can be purchased ahead of time from any digital device. A one-day non-resident license is \$12 and a five day is \$24. Since these licenses are purchased for a specific time period, you will need to refer to your itinerary and calculate the date you will be fishing. For example, if you are expedition number is 618-A1 and Fish Camp falls on day 8 of your trek, then you would start with 6/18 as day 1 and then day 8 would be 6/25. That is the date you would enter for a one day license. Adult licenses cannot be sold in the backcountry, so purchasing them prior to arrival is strongly recommended. You can also purchase them on any digital device prior to leaving for the backcountry.

License Type	NM Resident	Non-Resident
1-Day	\$16	\$16
5-Day	\$28	\$28
Adult Annual	\$29	\$60
Youth Annual	\$9	\$19
Youth 10-day	\$2	\$2

- If you are:
- **Youth 11 years and younger:** You do not need a license to fish in New Mexico.
 - **Youth 12-17 years old:** You may purchase a special Philmont Youth 10-Day fishing license at certain backcountry camps. If you’d like, you may purchase a New Mexico Youth Annual License instead (not available in the backcountry).
 - **Adults 18 years and older:** You must purchase a New Mexico fishing license (details below). This license can be purchased online. Adult fishing licenses are not available for purchase in the backcountry.
- All licenses include a mandatory \$4.00 Habitat Management access stamp. All annual licenses begin April 1 and end March 31. If you would like to purchase a NM fishing license at the Tooth of Time Traders in base camp, you may choose to [register for a Customer Identification Number \(CIN\)](#). This will allow Philmont staff to process a fishing license for you more quickly using your driver’s license as identification.
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Fly Fishing Tourney Boosts Council Donors

Waite Phillips, Philmont’s benefactor, was an enthusiastic and accomplished fly fisherman. He spent many days, along with America’s most prominent citizens, with his fly rod in hand fishing the small streams and lakes of “God’s Country.” Today, the Philmont Scout Ranch Annual Fly Fishing Invitational is held each year in September. It is open to Scouters who are recommended or accompanied by their local Scout Executive to enjoy a weekend of Scouting fellowship. It provides a great opportunity for councils to entice prospective donors to support their Scouting program. Ambassadors should check that their council is taking advantage of this fundraising opportunity. Guests arrive on Thursday afternoon, settle into their Base Camp accommodations, and enjoy a reception at the historic Old Mill Museum followed by a Western Buffalo BBQ. After a gourmet breakfast, group photos and a Villa tour the next day, Philmont organizes groups of guests who journey to one of several backcountry locations. Participants are provided with fly fishing equipment, a guide and a cook. They stay in rustic cabins devoid of modern conveniences such as running water, electricity, indoor plumbing, telephones, faxes and computers to enjoy the backcountry just as it was in 1920. Many business executives really appreciate being out of cell phone reach. An optional program for those who do not wish to “rough it” is to spend each night at base camp and have meals served at the Philmont Training Center dining hall. They are provided a guide and equipment to fish the Cimarron River and streams in the nearby National Forest. The 2021 Tournament dates are September 9 to 12. [Click here for details.](#) P2

Unprepared (Continued from page 1)

suffers a physical injury. If a Scout needs to be evacuated then Philmont resources are strained trying to accommodate an unaccompanied minor back at Base Camp. Sometimes, the affected individual recovers sufficiently that they can be reunited with their crew. Other times they are not. If the person is physically able, they may be assigned to work at Base Camp in Outfitting or Food Service. As a last resort, their parent has to be called to pick up the scout and take them home. Sadly, their once-in-a-lifetime Philmont opportunity may have gone away. **Philmont Ambassadors can help by contacting their Council Contingents and Individual Units to remind them of the need to get ready physically.** It’s not too late for crews to schedule a few more training hikes and camping trips to get everyone fit to hit the trail. There is simply no substitute for hiking with your pack for multiple days to get ready for Philmont. P2

Philmont Insights

Patches Celebrate Achievements Earned on Trail and at PTC

If you are an Ambassador who has completed a Trek, whether as a youth or Adult Leader, chances are that you proudly wear your arrowhead patch when you are promoting Philmont Scout Ranch. Likewise, if you have attended a conference at the Philmont Training Center (PTC), you may be showing off your PTC patch at a scouting midway exhibit. Patches are important mementos of the many accomplishments and achievements along the Scouting trail. Philmont is teeming with opportunities to earn more.

The arrowhead patch, first issued in 1957, is given to those who have completed a 12, 9, or 7 day expedition and met other requirements. Sometimes the patch is embellished with a special colored border to denote noteworthy occasions like the diamond white border of the 75th Philmont anniversary or the gold border of the 50th. The other requirements for earning the arrowhead include attending ranger training, completing a three-hour conservation project, and abiding by the wilderness pledge.



Arrowhead patches are also awarded to those who participate in Individual Opportunities such as Trail Crew, Rayado, R.O.C.S., STEM, Ranch Hands, or a qualifying Autumn Adventure Trek. The OA Trail Crew patch notably features the OA arrow.



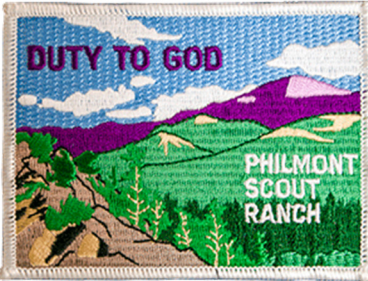
Once earned, the arrowhead patch can be worn on the right uniform pocket as a temporary patch by Scouts as well as Scouters.

In order to encourage a full crew of 12 members, Philmont now awards the *La Docena Adventurado*, “The Adventurous Dozen,” ribbon to those who fill out their maximum number of members. Started in 2005, this award encourages those with small crews to reach out to Scouts and Scouters to join their group and make a full crew. Not only does the incentive of earning *La Docena Adventurado* help fill up partial crews, it may help a smaller troop join up with another troop so both can do a Trek.

But just as hiking is only part of a Philmont adventure, there are other achievements within the experience that deserve and are recognized with their own patches.

The *Wilderness Pledge Achievement* patch, sponsored by Jansport, can be worn by those who learn and put into practice conservation principles on a trek. Many of these activities flow naturally from ranger training and conservation projects built into a trek. Purchases of the patch at Tooth of Time Traders help support Philmont’s sustainability initiatives like recycling and education programs.

Trek participants can also



earn the *Duty to God* patch by attending a religious service at Philmont, having a minimum of three daily devotionals with their crew, leading grace before meals, and other activities.

Keeping physically fit is one point of the Scout oath, and the *Trail of Courage* patch encourages Scouts to do just that. By pledging to stay fit, eating nutritiously, exercising regularly, being drug and tobacco free, and meeting other requirements, Scouts can earn this noteworthy patch. This program will start up again in 2021 once new patches arrive at the Tooth of Time Traders.

Summer is not the only time to enjoy Philmont. Winter Ad-

venture and Autumn Adventure participants also have their own patches for deserving crew members.

Graduates of a Philmont Training Center (PTC) conference receive a patch in recognition of their attendance. Philmont Training Center also has special patches for those who further enhance their scouting leadership skills. The Philmont Leadership Challenge (PLC) for adults and National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE) for youth award participants their own patches.

Each of these recognitions acknowledge a very special accomplishment in the life of everyone touched by the Philmont experience. They should be worn proudly. Hopefully, they will spark a conversation with another person who asks. “How did you get that awesome patch?”

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Don’t Speculate on the Answer

Ambassadors get plenty of questions about trek preparation, camp procedures, trail etiquette, etc., from crews getting ready for a Philmont trip. They also get questions like: “Can I climb the Tooth while at the Philmont Training Center (PTC)?” or “What are the activities available at Family Adventure Camp?” Instead of relying on your past experience, especially if it’s been years since your last trek or PTC conference, or even worse - speculating - the best practice is to refer the questioner to the materials Philmont provides them.

The 2021 Guidebook to Adventure can be downloaded [here](#). It is 80 pages of useful information that covers everything from A to W (accidents to winter adventure). A copy for each trek participant is sent to the lead adult advisor in the spring before their Trek. Adult leaders also receive the [Itinerary Guidebook](#) which not only describes each trek, but has procedures that the lead advisor and crew reservation contact need to know regarding reservations and procedural changes.

The 2021 PTC Family Adventure Camp Guidebook is also available on-line [here](#). By familiarizing yourself with its contents, Ambassadors can help families take full advantage of its opportunities for fun.

Answers to many questions can be also be found on the Philmont website. Ambassadors should look over material there for the most current information.

If you do not know or cannot find the answer, contact your regional coordinator first rather than calling Philmont yourself. Answers to common questions will be put in the newsletter so we all have consistent information.

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Welcome New Ambassadors

Name	Region	Council
Bobby Barnes	SR	Pee Dee Area
Guy Doane	SR	South Texas
Gregory Papandrew	SR	Greater Tampa Area
Clark Baker	SR	Sam Houston Area
Jack Hoyle	SR	Alamo Area Council
Richard Moore	CR	Great Rivers Council

Four Types of Backcountry Camps Fill Different Roles for Expeditions

Backcountry camps are always evolving. Some camps are closed if they need time to recover from years of use. Others are created to fill new needs such as spreading out crews to meet COVID requirements.

During the past year, new camps at Hack Meadow and Magpie were developed so that crews could hike directly to them from base camp to reduce the need for bussing. Other new camps were developed to replace ones damaged by the 2018 fires such as the new Chase Cow Camp.

All camps offer a great place to overnight in the backcountry. Camps fall into one of four specific types: Starting , Staffed, Trail and Dry.

Starting Camps – The first backcountry campsite for each crew is a starting camp. Rangers are the only staff in starting camps. Crews there receive more ranger training and become further oriented and acclimated to Philmont.

Staffed Camps – A camp director supervises each staffed camp, and counselors present unique program features. All staffed camps have reliable wa-



Lovers Leap, a starting camp, provides a large open meadow. During the first day on the trail, the Philmont Ranger will be going over the fundamentals of backcountry camping , navigation, hiking etiquette, campsite setup, bear and wildlife procedures, first aid, cooking skills, and Philmont history .

ter supplies and two-way radio communications with the Philmont logistics services. Commissaries, trading posts, and showers are available at some staffed camps.

Trail Camps – Trail camps have water but no staff. Here you are on your own or share the site with other crews. All itineraries include several trail and/or dry camps. They are part of the Philmont wilderness experience.

Dry Camps – Dry trail camps have no water and no staff. They are used because they provide scenic vistas, pleasant campsites, and valuable experiences. Many itineraries include a dry camp to teach the importance of water conservation. You may need to carry extra water for several miles before arriving at your dry camp. Check your itinerary to determine the closest place to get water. P2

Philmont Ambassador Newsletter

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