LAKETRAILS BASE CAMP

Our Mission: Inspiring teens with an appreciation of self, community, and environment through a wilderness canoeing adventure.

2027 Laketrails Parent Packet

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Laketrails wilderness canoeing and camping program. This packet contains important information for both you and your child. Please read everything carefully and completely to ensure a successful session at Laketrails for your son or daughter.

First of all, you should know that the heart of the Laketrails program involves your child's participation in a wilderness canoe trip. While in Base Camp, campers will sleep in cabins and eat in the Lodge, but the trail experience involves sleeping in tents, cooking over a campfire, and paddling and portaging canoes to various destinations around the lake. While no prior canoeing or camping experience is necessary, please know that the physical rigor of the trip can be strenuous at times as campers must help with paddling the canoes and carrying heavy packs and canoes over rocky and uneven surfaces.

Two important forms are necessary for participation. They are listed below along with information on what to do with the completed form. Please review this information carefully – check that forms are complete and accurate. Remember to return the health form at least two weeks prior to camp. The two required forms are:

- ✓ **Registration form:** Please complete the registration form along with payment on the website, OR print and complete the pdf version of the form. If registering by paper/pdf, please include a check or credit card information on the form and follow the mailing instructions at the bottom of the form.
- ✓ **Camper Health History:** We care about your child's safety at camp, and this form provides important medical information to Laketrails Base Camp. **Note:** It is the responsibility of the participant's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to provide for the youth's own accident and health coverage while participating in activities with Laketrails. Laketrails Base Camp does not provide any accident or health coverage for its participants. **This form should be sent to the Camp Office at least two weeks prior to camp.** If less than two weeks until the start of your session, please email the form to info@laketrails.org, or call for instructions.

If your child is registered for more than one session, you only need to fill out one set of forms. If you have more than one child, each child must have his/her own set of forms. Please contact Troy Douglas, Camp Director, at Laketrails at 218-223-8281 or 800-450-6460 if you have any questions.

Reminder: The balance of your camp fee is due 4 weeks prior to the start of the session.

Changes, Cancellations, and Refunds: As indicated on the registration form, the registration *deposit is non-refundable*. **Prior to the start of the session**, you may change your camp session (space permitting) without penalty. **From Jan. 1st - May 1st**, if you cancel your registration, the camp fee can be refunded (less the deposit). **From May 2nd - the start of your session**, the camp fee is not refundable except under exceptional circumstances involving serious participant illness/injury, with supporting documentation from a physician, and with consent of the Camp Director. ***Any such refund will total no more than one-half the session fee.*** Minor illness, homesickness, or a change in plans are not sufficient grounds for a refund.

Thank you for your attention to these important details. I look forward to seeing your teen (or "tween") at camp!

Sincerely,

Troy Douglas
Camp Director

The First & Last Day

Transportation

Laketrails is accessible only by boat or plane. If you plan to provide transportation yourself, please contact us for directions and a map to our nearest pick up point.

Bus service from several points in Minnesota is included in the camping fee. Listed on the invoice you will receive once your child is registered are the bus pick up (to Camp) and drop off (return) sites and schedule of times. Please note that the times listed are departure times, not boarding times, and plan accordingly. Our camp staff do attempt to call missing campers. However, if we have not heard from you and cannot reach you, the bus will have to leave without you. If you are running late for the bus, call us at 218-223-8281, and we will either hold the bus, or let you know of another point where you can catch the bus. The bus does stop for lunch and restroom breaks. Campers should bring a lunch or money from home as we'll stop at one of the elegant fast food establishments along our route.

Please remember to send in your health form at least two weeks prior to your child's camp session. Hand any other papers to the Camp Staff member as you board the bus. Bus safety and behavior rules will be explained by the driver and the Laketrails staff member prior to departure. These rules are related to common courtesy and the safe operation of the bus.

Border Crossing Information

ALL campers coming to Laketrails **must have** one of the following documents for identification at the US/ Canadian border:

1. a **Passport/ Passport Card***
2. a **Birth Certificate—** must be an **original** or a **certified copy.**
3. an **Enhanced Driver's License—** must have the phrase "Enhanced Drivers License" printed on the license.

*A passport or passport card that has expired can sometimes still be acceptable as long as application has been made for a new document. In this case, please contact the Laketrails office to notify us of the situation.

It is imperative that your child has the **Parent Authorization form** and the proper documentation. If you have any questions, please call us before leaving home. We work closely with the various border crossing agencies, but they do require us to meet all regulations, and will not cut us any slack in the process. If even one person lacks proper documentation, the entire bus can be denied entry to Canada. These forms should be kept separate from your luggage and given to the Camp Staff representative.

Arrival

The bus to camp arrives at Young's Bay in the Northwest Angle about 4:30 p.m. on the opening day of the session. Campers not riding the bus to camp should plan on reaching Young's Bay at this time. (Please let the Camp Director know at least 3 days in advance if your child will not be riding the bus.) At Young's Bay you will be met by the Laketrails boats which will bring you the last 6 miles to camp.

When you arrive at Laketrails you will meet first with the Camp Nurse who will interview you to determine your current health status. At this time give the Camp Nurse all medications or supplements to be taken at camp/on trail. After this you will turn in all phones and electronics and receive your cabin assignment. Participants should be prepared to carry their luggage about 100 yards to their cabins.

Cabin Assignments

We make every effort to place campers with requested cabin-mates. We have learned from long experience that placing three or more requested campers together tends to negatively impact cabin dynamics. Therefore, campers may request one (1) person only, within one year of the camper's age. Campers should request each other on their registration forms. Please understand that due to enrollment numbers, it may not be possible to fulfill all requests. Thank you for your understanding.

Departure

On the last day of the session, rising is at 6:30 a.m. Boats begin leaving Laketrails at 7:30 a.m. with campers and luggage. The bus departs Young's Bay at 9:00 a.m. Unless you notify us otherwise, it is expected that campers will be dropped off at the same sites where they boarded the bus. The scheduled drop-off times are also noted on the camper's invoice. We make every effort to stay on schedule, but weather, equipment problems, or border crossing delays can occasionally cause the bus to run late. If we know this in advance we will try to contact you. You may always contact us at 218-223-8281 if you are concerned about the late arrival of the bus.

Preparing For Camp

Camper Requirements

Laketrails was founded in 1952 to provide a true wilderness adventure experience for teens. Campers must be age 13-18 in order to attend regular sessions. Our middle school session is open to youth who have completed grades 6, 7, or 8.

Our canoe trips commonly involve entering and exiting canoes on rocky surfaces that can be wet and slippery, and portaging heavy canoes and packs over rough and uneven terrain. While no previous camping or canoeing experience is necessary, it is important that campers understand they will be engaging in these outdoor activities.

Laketrails places a strong emphasis on teamwork. Therefore, campers are expected to help one another with a wide variety of tasks and activities throughout the session. This cooperative attitude often helps youth to develop a sense of community and fosters friendship and a genuine sense of accomplishment.

Consecutive Sessions

Campers registered for consecutive sessions may stay at camp between sessions. As staff are taking well-deserved time off between trips, campers staying over will have minimal supervision and are expected to help with camp chores during this interim.

Camper Health and Medication

All medication (including prescription or over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and all other supplements) must be brought to camp in the original container (as purchased or issued). Containers must detail the name of the patient, the name of the medication, directions for dosage, and the name of the person ordering the medication. All medication (as specified above) taken on the trip must be noted on the health form, and will be held by the Camp Nurse or his/her assistant, who will dispense it in Base Camp, and give it to the Guide(s) to dispense at the proper time(s) while on the canoe trip. With limited exceptions, all medications, including over-the counter medications, will be kept in the Nurse's station. However, if you wish your child to self-dispense their own medication, be sure to note this on their medical form or on a separate, signed sheet, and contact the Laketrails office for further instructions. Please note, cannabis/marijuana used for any purpose and in any form is not allowed at Laketrails. It is illegal to cross the border with any form of cannabis.

Canoe Trip Documents

Any camper at Laketrails who is 18 years of age must apply for and receive a Remote Area Border Crossing permit prior to the canoe trip. Application for this permit is made to the Canadian government and must be done approximately 2-3 months in advance of the trip. See this link to apply. Please contact the Laketrails office upon registration if you have questions or need any assistance in how to obtain the permit. (Campers under the age of 18 are covered by a special youth group RABC permit.)

Clothing/Equipment

Trips are hard on clothing and equipment. Portage trails are uneven, weather can change abruptly, and campers will be very active. Consider each item carefully as you pack. Is it durable? What would happen if it were torn, lost, or damaged? For the canoe trip, campers' personal gear and sleeping bags are packed together in waterproof packs supplied by the camp. All personal belongings should be plainly marked with first and last name for identification. Items you do not take with you on your canoe trip can be left in your luggage at Base Camp. Cabin storage is limited.

As a general rule of thumb, bring old clothes. If you are going to invest in something, rainwear and footwear are the most important parts of the wardrobe. It is also a good idea to pack a clean, dry set of clothes that you will wear for the ride home, one that will not be worn during your stay at camp.

Please bring only these two pieces of luggage: a sleeping bag and one suitcase/duffel bag.

Please Bring:

Sleeping bag
2 pairs shorts
2 pairs of pants
Underwear for 1 week

***Note**: A rain jacket and pants along with sturdy "wet shoes" are of great importance on trail. Please be sure your child is prepared with these two items. (Please call the camp office with questions.)*

Optional Items:

Notebook/pen or pencil for journaling	*Insect repellent (non-aerosol is required)
Camera (NOT a cell phone)	Sunglasses
Fishing gear (rod & reel, artificial lures, etc.)	Sandals (Keen, Teva, Chaco, etc.)

Insect repellant can degrade tent fabric. Therefore, we require a non-aerosol type. Long-sleeved shirts and pants treated with Permethrin are preferred and effective options to protect against bugs.

Prohibited Items:

- Electronic devices of any kind (including phones, electronic toys, games, I-Pods, tablets, etc.). They are a distraction from the experience, and their use is not allowed at camp. These items must be turned in to the camp store (the Duck's Nest) for safekeeping when you arrive. You'll get them back for the ride home.
- Personal sports equipment is usually not allowed at camp. Please call the camp office if your child wishes to bring this type of personal equipment.
- Excessive cash. The camp store has snacks, clothing, and a variety of items ranging from $1 to $60.00. You might also want some money for lunch on the bus rides to camp and back home again. We do ask campers to deposit all cash in the camp store. If deposited, camp will be responsible for it. Otherwise, Laketrails is not responsible for lost or stolen cash.
- Weapons, fireworks, firecrackers and other hazardous materials are prohibited at camp and are also prohibited at Canadian and U.S. customs.
- Alcohol, drugs (including all forms of marijuana), and tobacco products (including E-cigarettes or other vaping products) are prohibited at camp. Any of the above items, or other inappropriate or hazardous items brought to camp will be confiscated. *Please note: All forms of marijuana, including that used for medical purposes, is illegal to transport across the Canadian border and is therefore not allowed at camp.*

- Pets or any other animals belonging to an individual are prohibited from the Laketrails program.
- Snacks. Please do not bring extra food, candy, or snacks to camp. Laketrails will provide plenty of nutritious and tasty food for meals and snack times, or you can satisfy your sweet tooth with items from our camp store. Food brought from home will attract unwelcome guests in the cabins—such as mice, ants, bears, or other wild friends.
- Any of the above items, or other inappropriate or hazardous items brought to camp will be confiscated.

Lost and Found

We strongly recommend that our campers bring no valuable items that are not of direct use in the program (For example, cameras and fishing gear are fine, but expensive jewelry should be avoided). Laketrails is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items. (Laketrails will be responsible for cash and other smaller valuables held in the camp store as long as we are aware of their value.) If you think your child is missing an item when he/she returns home, you may call Laketrails at (218) 223-8281. If we can find the lost item, you will be required to prepay a minimum postage and handling fee of $15 for the return of the item.

Additionally, we request that at the end of a session, campers take home all items that they brought to camp. Since Laketrails is located on an island, garbage disposal is sometimes challenging. Items left behind—because a camper no longer wants them—can create a problem for our staff to dispose of properly.

While At Camp

Camper Goals

Laketrails embraces three specific goals for each camper in our program:

First, we strive to instill each youth with an appreciation of him/herself. This is most commonly achieved through recognition of each individual's contributions, abilities, positive personality traits, etc. When our Staff spend quality time listening to campers and engaging in both conversation and play, an attitude is conveyed of acceptance and value for the individual.

Secondly, we work to build an appreciation of community. This typically takes the form of participation in various groups, for example being a member of a particular cabin, canoe trip group, or small team within each canoe trip. The Laketrails Staff frequently teach campers about the importance of every person doing his/her part to help the group succeed. This culture of community living builds a sense of teamwork where individuals work together for the common good.

And thirdly, Laketrails teaches youth to appreciate our natural environment. Campers are taught about human impact on nature, the importance of reducing our waste and recycling whenever possible, and respecting our environment. By living close to nature, we actively work to instill in each youth a sense of the beauty of creation and a concern to preserve it for the future.

Laundry

Laundry for campers who stay for **more** than a single session can be done at camp in very limited quantities. Laundry may be done by a staff member, or we may ask the camper to help. (We'll supply the detergent.)

Telephone Contact

Parents may contact the Camp Director at any time to discuss their child's experience at (218) 223-8281. Due to the relatively brief period they are in camp, campers are generally not permitted to initiate telephone calls home. In the event a camper requests to make a phone call, permission to do so is granted at the Camp Director's discretion, and only after camp makes advance contact with the parent/guardian to discuss the situation.

Homesickness

We will do everything possible to help your son or daughter adjust and be happy once they arrive at Laketrails. We try hard to let campers know that they are a welcome member of the Laketrails community.

If you have concerns about your child feeling homesick, please let us know, and before they leave home, do discuss with your child the very normal homesick feelings that can occur while away from home. Such conversations should include the following:

1. Emphasize that it will be *very* normal if the youth feels homesick, particularly if they haven't spent a lot of time away from home in the past.
2. Reassure them that even adults feel homesick from time to time.
3. Reassure your child that they *will* be able to get through it; you have confidence in them.
4. Let the youth know that you will NOT come and get them because you want them to grow by getting through the week. It's also not very practical because of the distance to camp, crossing borders, being out on an island, etc.
5. Encourage them to write in a journal to express their thoughts, draw, or they can write letters home.
6. Let them know that you feel very proud of them for **being brave and trying something new.**

Occasionally, parents/guardians have difficulty saying good-bye to their child for the time spent at camp. It's OK to let your child know you'll think about them while they're gone, but it is important to not dwell on how much you will miss them. "Separation anxiety" for parents is a real thing, but it's not helpful to let your child know that you're having difficulty with it. Like your child, *you* will get through the session too!

Mail

Campers often appreciate receiving letters from home. Remember, though, that most of their experience is on a wilderness canoe trip where mail delivery is not available. Generally, they will have access to mail service on days one and two, and six and seven of their session. The US Postal Service delivers mail to Oak Island on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only. Consider sending a letter prior to your camper's departure from home to be opened when they return to Base Camp from their canoe trip.

Experts recommend keeping letters upbeat. It's often best to talk about looking forward to seeing them and hearing of their successes at camp and *not* emphasizing how much you may miss them.

United Parcel Service (UPS) and Federal Express both deliver to the island Monday through Friday. Since neither UPS nor FedEx deliver to PO boxes, use "Pier 25" in place of "P.O. Box 25" when addressing your package. Always make sure "Laketrails" also appears on the label. Please refrain from sending food.

Address mail to your son or daughter as follows:

(Person's Name)
c/o Laketrails Base Camp
P.O. Box 25
Oak Island, MN 56741

Visiting Laketrails

Because of our remote location, few parents are able to visit Laketrails. However, some parents may be interested in seeing the place that has had such a huge impact on their child's life. We ask that there be no visits to camp during sessions, as we are very busy and involved with campers during this time, and campers have only a short time to be in Base Camp. However, we do have some volunteer opportunities during which you can have a chance to experience Laketrails. One of these is the annual "Memorial Day" clean up during which alumni and friends help get Laketrails ready for the summer months. If you are interested in this or other opportunities, please contact our office and ask to be added to the friends and alumni mailing list.

Emergency Communication

In case of a medical or family emergency at home, contact Troy Douglas, Camp Director, at (218) 223-8281.

Risks and Medical Care

Laketrails has made the scenic natural beauty of Lake of the Woods our setting for showing young people how to care for themselves and the environment. It is important for parents and campers to acknowledge that due to the remoteness of our trips, instant communication and quick access to emergency medical services is not always possible.

Injuries, illnesses, or other situations that occur in Base Camp and require evacuation or care from a professional medical provider can take as much as two hours or more to receive treatment as the nearest hospital is over 70 miles away across water, gravel roads, and the border. And, when canoe trips are "on trail" it can take considerably more time to reach a medical facility.

Our trip leaders are trained and certified in Wilderness First Aid, however, our staff is *not* trained in handling special medical needs and serious chronic health conditions. Laketrails Guides have a thorough knowledge of the areas they are traversing, and carry a group first aid kit and an emergency contact device at all times. Our program cannot guarantee accident free travel, but our attitude and investment in overall safety can ensure that in the case of accident or illness, our counselors have the training and judgment to make appropriate and expeditious decisions. We ask that parents who have concerns in this area please contact the Camp Director prior to registration to discuss any significant medical or health needs that your child might have.

All trips have emergency evacuation plans. Should any serious accident or illness occur while on trail, our primary concern is to get the injured person to the appropriate medical facilities. Once we have done this, we will notify parents or guardians as soon as possible.

In case of minor illness or injury, participants will be treated in the field. We do not normally notify parents or guardians unless we feel there is the need for medical follow up. In that case we will either call or send a note home with the camper.

In the event of a more serious injury or illness, we will call parents at the first opportunity. At this time we will explain the situation, discuss our plan of action, and perhaps ask for further information. We reserve the right to send an individual home if our health care specialist or a physician so advises. If you plan to be away for any length of time during your teen's time on their trip, please arrange for a relative or neighbor to be able to pick up your child should he or she become ill or injured. Please notify camp of this situation by putting the name, address and telephone number of the relative or neighbor on the camper's health form.

If, for religious or other reasons, you cannot sign the Authorization for Health Care (located on the Camper Health History form) and thereby refuse medical treatment for your child, please contact the camp office at 218-223-8281.

Non-Medical Evacuations

Non-medical evacuations negatively impact every aspect of a trip. If a participant is evacuated early from a trip for non-medical reasons (i.e., refusal to cooperate or failure to keep themselves or others safe, etc.) the participant's family will be charged an evacuation fee of not less than $100. The final fee may be higher, to account for staff time, transportation costs, other expenses related to the evacuation, and the impact of the

evacuation on other participants' experiences. To ensure a safe, quality experience for every participant, please ensure your teen is ready and willing to complete the trip before they arrive at camp. While our trips are not "boot camp"-style experiences, we do not recommend sending teens if they are unwilling to go.

Questions:

If you have questions about the above or any other policies of Laketrails, please call 218-223-8281 to speak with the Camp Director. We'll do our best to help you!