

# Introduction to Backpacking and Cycle Touring

Presenters:

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# Agenda – Saturday

- Introductions
- What Does Backpacking Have to do with Bicycle Touring
- Intro to the Series
- Clothing and Equipment
- Potable Water
  - **Gear Breakout**
- Camping Equipment
- Personal Hygiene
- Cooking Equipment
  - **Gear Breakout**
- Food/Snacks
- Emergency/Medical Equipment
- Safety/Weather
- Physical Fitness
- Leave No Trace (LNT)
- Map & Compass
- Signing Up for A Trip
- Our Practices
- Wrap up/ Review Sunday Agenda
- Breakouts -Backpacks/Bikes

# Introductions

- YOU – Our participants
- Christine Fogarty
- Dana Perry
- Colleen McLaughlin
- Denny LaForce

# What Does Backpacking Have To Do With Cycle Touring??

- Common gear but different mode of transportation
- Introduce people to the joys of backpacking and cycle touring
- Help you find your comfort level
- Help you find the balance between comfort and weight
- Support you in increasing your skills and abilities
- Enjoyment of remote and unique places
- Awareness of Leave No Trace (LNT) practices
- Provide info on gear and AMC practices
- Offer safe and enjoyable volunteer-led AMC outings

# Introduction to the Series

- Graduated for increased difficulty with each trip
- Provide the opportunity to acquire the appropriate gear and skill to use it
- Limited to 6-8 max. participants per trip
- Preference will be given to participants of this workshop
- Others may participate on a space available basis
- Homogenous groups, where everyone is at the same skill level

# Backpacking

## Clothing and Equipment

- Preparing for the worst weather- dressing in layers
  - **Base Layer:** non-irritating, non-constricting, wicking synthetic or wool material
  - **Insulation layer:** synthetic or wool material that can be added or removed as needed
  - **Environmental layer:** these protect against wind, rain, snow, sun, etc. Should be lightweight, durable, loose-fitting, water resistant, and easy to vent excess moisture buildup from the base and insulation layers
- Rain gear: dry = warm, warm = 98.6
  - Most rain gear keeps water out! Sounds great, right? Not if it keeps water in too!
  - Great wind layer
- Boots – broken in and waterproof/breathable
  - Never wear new hiking boots into the backcountry! You will get blisters...
  - Polyester or smart wool moisture wicking socks are essential to your hiking comfort. Your feet sweat up to ½ cup a day. Always bring 2 extra pairs

# Bike Touring

## Clothing and Equipment

- Preparing for the worst weather- dressing in layers is key
  - **Base Layer:** non-irritating, snug-fitting, wicking synthetic or wool material
    - Merino wool works great in all weather
  - **Insulation layer:** synthetic or wool material that can be added or removed as needed
  - **Environmental layer:** these protect against wind, rain, snow, sun, etc. Should be lightweight, durable, snug-fitting, water resistant, brightly colored and easy to vent excess moisture buildup from the base and insulation layers
  - Mitts, gloves – padding and environmental protection
  - Cycling shorts/trousers – comfort is primary importance
- Rain gear – top, bottom, hands, feet, head
  - Also may need to keep bike bits dry (cycle computer, bags)
- Feet – mountain-biking shoes work great on & off bike, don't forget overshoes to keep feet dry when it rains
  - Cycling sandals (with or without socks) can work well in warmer weather
  - Add waterproof socks ("sealskin" brand) if it gets wet out
  - Merino wool socks work great and stay relatively odor-free for a few days
- Bring a set of clothes for your time spent off-the bike

# Add'l Backpack/Bike Touring Clothing and Equipment

- Hat, sun glasses, sun screen, bug repellent – sun and bugs can ruin your day
  - Protect yourself from the sun with a minimum of 15spf sun block, polarizing sun glasses, and light weight hat or bandana (multiple use item)
  - Protect against biting/stinging bugs with something that really works, and nothing works like Deet
- Trekking poles – a little help along the way
  - Trekking poles can provide stability, and transfer approx. 20% of your effort to the upper body, helping you to go further, easier (also it's a multi-use item)
- Water bottles/bags, filtration/purification – clean, refreshing hydration
  - Personal preferences: bottles or hydration packs

# Potable Water

- Ways to produce potable water
  - Filters (Giardia, Cryptosporidium)
  - Purifiers (UV, SteriPen (Ultraviolet (UV-C) MIOX))
  - Iodine tablets
  - Chlorine dioxide
  - Boiling
  - Leverage municipal/potable water sources when you can

# Gear Review Breakout

- Clothing and Equipment
- Potable Water (Water Purification)

# Camping Equipment

- Tent body, rain fly and ground cloth
- Sleeping bag/sleeping pad/bag liner
- Bear bag (canisters)/multifunction rope
- Cat hole shovel (Leave No Trace)
- Space blanket – emergency use
- Dining fly/tarp for cook area cover in bad weather
- Keeping it all dry (protecting your gear)

# Personal Hygiene

- Build a mini-kit – a smaller version of “your stuff”

- Baby wipes
- Dr. Bonner’s soap
- Hand sanitizer
- Nail file/ clippers
- Dental care
- Floss –can also be used to sew with

- Plastic mirror (used for emergencies too)
- Spare zip bags
- Feminine issues
- Small microfiber camp towel

# The “Oh CRAP” Kit

- Bring a small safety and repair kit
  - Compass
  - Lighter
  - Emergency fire starter
  - Pocket knife with pliers/small multi-tool
  - Small scissors
  - Tweezers
  - Small sewing kit
  - Boot laces
  - Large and small buckles
  - Small tube of superglue
  - Duct tape
  - Water purification tabs
  - Sleeping pad repair kit (if using inflatable pad)
  - Whistle

# The “Oh CRAP” Kit, Part 2

- More stuff if you're on your bike:
  - Latex/nitrile gloves
    - Blood barrier
    - Keeps hands clean while you fix a flat or reseal a chain
  - Pump & CO2
    - Belt and suspenders
  - Tire levers
  - Chain lube
  - Spare tubes and patch kit
  - Bike multi-tool
  - For long distances
    - Spare tire
    - Spare chain
    - Spare spokes
  - Zip ties

# Cooking Equipment

- Individual or group gear– it's all up to you
- Group gear can include:
  - Food
  - Cooking system
  - Pot/pans/utensils
  - Dining Fly
  - Other items that can be shared?
- Everyone carries their own, or everyone carries some group gear
- Group gear can lighten the load on longer trips

# Cooking Equipment (cont'd)

- Stoves – personal preference
  - There are many choices and each depends on personal preference, cost, size, weight, fuel type, and more. Many stores will rent, or let you try one out
- Pot/pans/utensils – weight and durability counts
  - The bare basics are all you need out there. Keep it light and minimal
- Go to the stores and get familiar with what's available. Ask questions, do the research
- Once you buy something, practice outdoors before going into the backcountry. Know how to use your stove. Carry spare parts if needed. You can prevent accidents and eat well if you practice first

# Cooking Equipment (cont'd)

- Fuel Requirements
  - White gas or alcohol stoves
    - Warm weather ~1.5 oz of fuel per person/day
    - Cold weather ~3 oz of fuel per person/day
  - Canister stoves
    - Start with fresh canister or have back-up
    - Weigh canister before use and then after to know how much fuel you have used/left. Mark the canister accordingly

# Gear Review Breakout

- Camping Equipment
- Personal Hygiene and Oh Crap kit
- Cooking Equipment

# Food/Snacks

- Consider calories, prep, fuel/water needs & taste
- 3 Squares – nutrition on the trail
  - Breakfast: Yogurt raisins, long cook oatmeal, dried fruit
  - Lunch: P. Butter, wraps, dried fruit, apples/bananas, cheese, beef stick
  - Dinner: Foil pouch tuna, chicken, whole grain pasta, Knorr dried sauces, dried veg, prepared soup from dried veggie soup mix or bean soup mix, Asian noodles, stuffing mix, couscous – hot chocolate or tea for dessert
- Snacks – Assortment of nuts, bars, dried fruit
- Don't diet – eat like a king! You've earned it!
  - Cycling costs you at least 30 calories/mile – snack often
- Get food that's nutritious, that you'll want to eat not have to eat because there's nothing else
- Simple and lightweight is best - Pre-pack food to eliminate waste
- Approximately 1 lb/per person/per day

# Food/Snacks (cont'd)

Critter Warning! Bugs, Bears and “Mini-Bears”(rodents)

- Bear Bag – A “secure” place for your stuff – Minimum 8 feet off of the ground and six feet from tree or branch – use two rope system
- Use bear boxes if provided
- Bear canisters are required in some areas – check in advance
- Hang your food far away from your tent – at least 100 feet – and away from your cooking area and cleaning area –
- All food and “smellable” items go in bear bag at night
- Food spills - keep food-soiled clothes with bear bag or wash them
- Keep cooking, cleaning and eating area at least 100 feet from sleeping area - “The Bermuda Triangle”

# Emergency/Medical Equipment

- Get trained! – Carry a kit and know how to use it
- Worcester Chapter offers CPR and Wilderness First Aid classes
- Training & practice can save your life, or someone else's
- Carry an emergency medical kit, with things in it that you know how to use
- Hotspots/Blisters – bane of the backpacker/cyclist alike
  - Everyone gets blisters, but it doesn't have to ruin your trip
  - Take care of hot-spots before they become a problem. Athletic tape or duct tape can prevent a hot spot from becoming a blister
  - Always carry mole-skin, second-skin, etc to treat a fluid filled blister after draining it

# Emergency/Med. Equipment (cont'd)

- Tarp (plastic or Tyvek) - multi-purpose and it could save a life
  - The human burrito! Used to wrap up a hypothermia victim
  - The insulator. Used to insulate you from the ground during a lightning storm
  - The water barrier. Under your tent or over you head, it's there when you need it

# Backpacking Safety/Weather

- Leave your trip plan and estimated arrival time back at your house with someone
- What if I get lost?
- STOP! (Stop, Think, Options, Proceed)
  - Retrace steps to last blaze/trail/road junction
  - Check what time is it? Do you have time to change your trip destination?
  - Stay where you are, find a safe place to spend the night
  - Don't make your situation worse by taking extra risks
- What to do when encountering wild animals
  - Stay as far away as possible
  - Bears – get in a group, appear as large as possible, make noise. If attack - Black bears, fight back. Brown bears, play dead

# Backpacking Safety/Weather (cont'd)

- Know what kinds of weather conditions you are likely to encounter on the trail – do this while planning your trip
- Check the weather report before you leave the house
  - Stormy weather happens early afternoon – though in White Mountains, anytime of the year!
- Take a deep breath - Don't panic!

# Cycling Road Safety/Weather

- Know what kinds of weather conditions you are likely to encounter on the trip
  - Wind is more often an issue than rain
- Be safe, be visible
  - Reflectors, front and rear lights, reflective clothing
- Know and follow the rules of the road – these vary by state and country
  - Tune your reactions to the locale
- Overseas drivers **are not** more respectful of cyclists!
- Take a deep breath – Don't panic! (we really mean it!)

# Cycling Pre-trip Checks and Skills

- Pre-trip bike checklist
  - Check cables for wear/fraying
  - Check brake pads
  - Check condition of chain
  - Add reflectors all around, lights to front and rear
- Learn how to do at least most of the basic fixes
  - Fix a flat
  - Replace a chain
- Know and follow the local “rules of the road”
  - These vary by state and country

# Map & Compass

- Never leave home without it – get trained and practice
- *Be Expert with Map and Compass: The Complete Orienteering Handbook* by Bjorn Kjellstrom
- Search [Outdoors.org](https://www.outdoors.org) for Chapter sponsored courses

# Physical Fitness

## Training in the margins of a busy life

- Wear your pack and walk around the neighborhood – don't forget to break in those boots!
- Load panniers with water bottles and go for a ride!
  - Add more bottles as you get fitter
  - If you “hit the wall”, dump out water and cycle home light
- Learn how your pack/bike feels when it's loaded
- Tweak straps and load to try to feel more comfortable
- In planning a trip, don't bite off more than you can chew, easy day on first day 3-5 mi. max. on foot , 50 mi. on bikes if possible
- Gradual increase in distance with each day

# Physical Fitness (cont'd)

- Fitness Level
  - Insist on your and your crews' conditioning and training weeks in advance
  - Get out and hike/bike with a partially loaded pack/bike on a regular basis pre-trip
  - Understand any physical limitations/issues
  - Adjust plans/expectations to physical preparedness
  - Experienced hiker/biker? Easy to you may not be easy to others
- Preparedness
  - Do a practice shakedown hike and gear shakedown
  - Test/use new gear in advance & make adjustments
    - Fit pack, set up tent, use stove and filter
  - Have a designated co-leader – review trip plan

# Physical Fitness (cont'd)

- Injury avoidance – both sports
  - Most common backpacking ailments involve the knees
    - Do targeted strengthening exercises
      - » Lunges and wall squats (quad strength)
      - » Balancing exercises to improve knee and ankle strength
    - Stretching is a must on and off the trail!
      - » IT band
      - » Calf muscle (upper and lower)
      - » Achilles tendon (multiple directions to get all strands)
      - » Quads
      - » Hamstrings
      - » Glutes'
    - Core and upper body strength greatly improves efficiency!

# Attitude is everything!

## Enjoy the ride

- Backpacking & bike touring can be challenging – expect some difficulty and be willing to accept it as a part of the experience
- The mental can sometimes be harder than the physical
- Stop to smell the roses – you may only pass this way once
- Be open to the possibilities – it only takes one little thing to make your day or trip

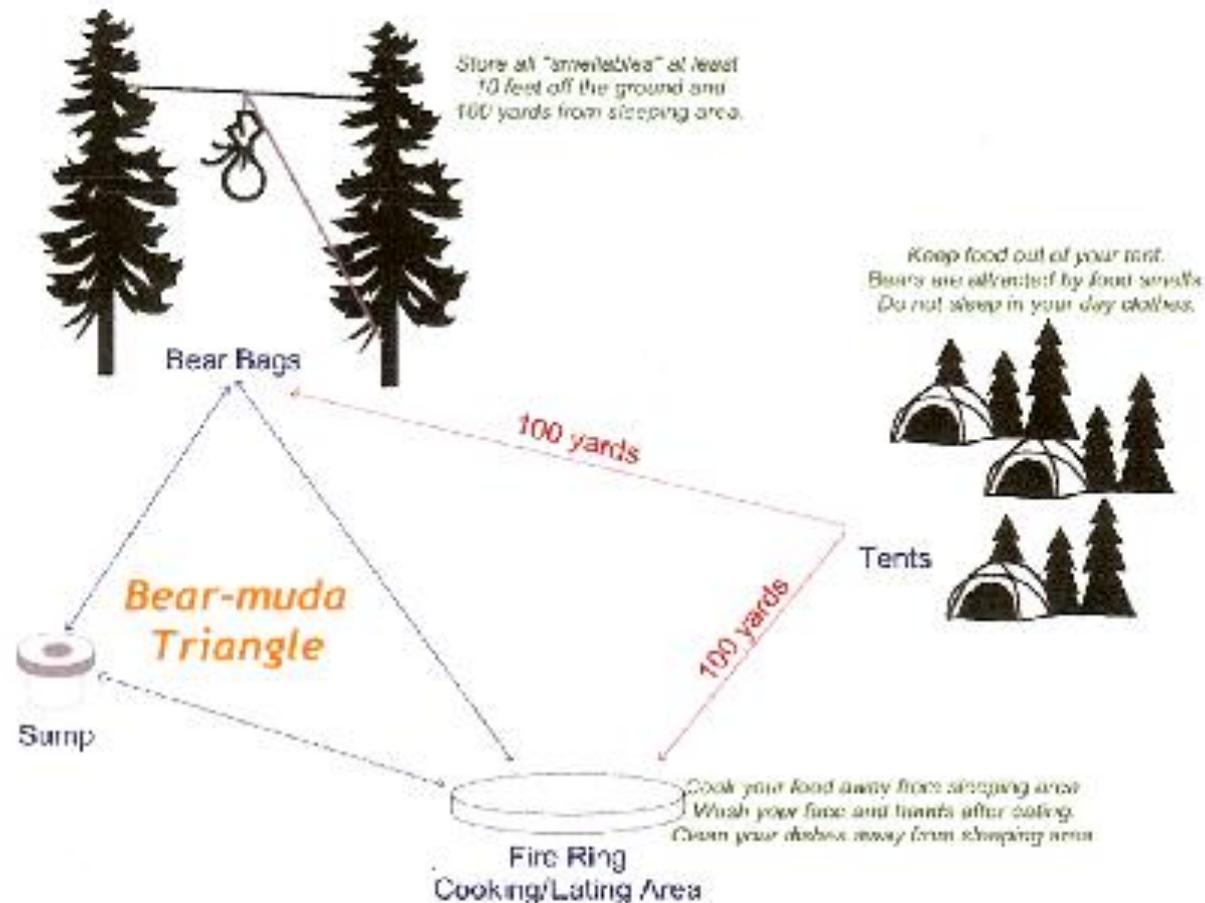
# Leave No Trace Principles

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Stay on durable surfaces when hiking or camping
- Dispose of waste properly- Pack in/pack out (yours and others)
- Leave what you find
- Respect the environment – make your campsite look like you were never there
- Respect others
- Stay away from animals – if your presence changes their behavior – you are too close!

# Camp site selection/etiquette

- Camp whenever possible in designated sites
- Plan to tent, use shelters when available – yield shelters to long distance hikers
- Don't hog the camp site
- Camp with the five “W's” in mind
  - Wind, Water, Weather, Wildlife and Widow Makers

# Camp site selection/etiquette



# Signing Up for a Trip

- Search for trips using the online trip listing; search for “Explore your inner Backpacker ” or “Cycle Touring Series”
- Contact the Registrar for each trip in the series (by phone or email)
- When inquiring about a trip via email
  - Provide your full name
  - Put the trip name/date in the subject line of the e-mail
- Complete screening forms when they are requested
- Respond honestly to screening questions

# Signing Up for a Trip (cont'd)

- Purpose of Screening:
  - Safety and fun
  - Ensures that all participants know what to expect on the trip
  - Ensures that all participants are of a similar ability or experience level so that they can stay together as a group to enjoy the activity

# Signing Up for a Trip (cont'd)

Screening Questions might include:

- Have you done any backpacking/bike touring recently?
- If not, what trips have you gone on?
- How do you feel about hiking/touring in groups?
- What gear would you normally carry on a trip like this?
- What kind of gear do you have?
- What do you do to stay in shape between trips?
- How do you feel about sharing a tent/room with a member of your own gender?

# Our Practices

- Every individual is responsible for having the appropriate skills, physical conditioning, equipment and supplies for the activity in which they've chosen to participate
- AMC Volunteer-Led Activities  
Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks & Release Agreement
  - Every participant signs the Release
  - Protects our volunteer leaders

# Our Practices (cont'd)

- The leader and co-leader are in charge; please respect and support their decisions
- Conditions change, and we may need to:
  - Turn back because of weather, elapsed time on the trip, trip conditions, a participant's physical condition, or other reasons
  - Manage a participant's fatigue or injury
- Safety comes first!

# Our Practices (cont'd)

- We stay together on the trail
  - We start as a group, we travel as a group, and we finish as a group
  - We travel at the slowest person's pace
  - We don't go ahead of the leader, or fall behind the sweep
  - We stop at all reasonable junctions and wait for the sweep to arrive, then we count heads!
  - We leave no one behind
- Learn more about the inherent risks of these sports and how you can become better prepared for your activity at [hikesafe.com](http://hikesafe.com) and [bikexpert.com](http://bikexpert.com)

# Current Series Trips<sub>(cont'd)</sub>

- Shakedown day hike (backpack):
  - April 19. Whitehall Reservation, Hopkinton.
- April trips
  - April 26 and 27. M-S Greenway #1 backpack
- May trips:
  - May 17 and 18. M-S Greenway #2 backpack
  - May 23-25. Mid-State Trail Backpack

# Current Series Trips<sub>(cont'd)</sub>

- June trips:
  - June 7 and 8. Sandy Neck backpack. Pending
  - June 20 - 22. M-S Greenway #3 backpack. Pending
  - June 27-29. Franconia Ridge backpack
  - June 7 and 8. Otter River cycle tour
  - June 20-23. Provincetown cycle tour
  - June 25-July 3. PEI cycle tour (NY/NJ chapter)
- July trips:
  - July 16-20. Maine/Rangeley backpack
  - July 18-20. AT Berkshires backpack

# Current Series Trips<sub>(cont'd)</sub>

- August trips:
  - Aug 8-10. Carter-Moriah Range backpack
- September Trips:
  - Backpacking trips TBD
  - Sept. 20-22. Northeast Connecticut cycle tour

# Saturday Wrap Up

- It's a lot to know – Ask lots of questions - Experienced people like to share their knowledge!
- Rent instead of buy – from EMS or REI – find out what you like and what you don't before spending the money!
- Simple things from Wal-mart & Target might work – you may already own good substitutes
- There's no right or wrong – there's things that work (for you)– things that don't
- There is no bad weather, just poor clothing choices and bad planning
- Hands on experience is best education
- Workshop handouts - Gear List - etc

# Agenda - Sunday

- **Day 2:**
- Trip Planning
- Backpack packing demo/ Bike gear shakedown (bring your stuff)
- Individual Gear shakedown(Bring your stuff!)
- Hands-on Outdoor Activities – Let's get outdoors!
  - Site Selection/Organization – Setting Camp
  - Bear Bag hanging
  - Water purification
  - Backpacking Stove usage
  - LNT
  - Sanitation
- Group discussion and learning exchange (in lodge)
  - Before you leave...

# Activity Specific Breakouts

- Backpacking Breakout location
  - Backpacks
  
- Cycle Touring Breakout location
  - Choosing a bicycle
  - Loading a bike

# Backpack

- Internal frame – External frame
- Weight and Volume
- How to Fit a Pack
- Gender specific – fits properly
- Comfortable padded hip belts
- Multiple adjustment points
- Is gear readily accessible?
- Zippered pockets and compartments
- Hip belt pockets
- Water bottle pocket – hydration bladder
- Exterior tie downs and daisy chains
- Distribute weight properly – Loading a pack
- Interior waterproof bags / pack cover
- Organize - Stuff Sacks

# Choosing a Bicycle

- Consider distance, terrain, days on bike, load on bike, climate, season
  - “Credit card” touring vs. a self-supported cross-country expedition
  - Camping adds additional gear and weight, also more freedom
- Bike must fit properly to avoid discomfort, injury
- Seat should be *comfortable*! Buy one that you like.
  - You wouldn't hike in boots that hurt your feet, would you?
- Wheels with sturdier spokes, more spokes, to handle weight
- Fenders/mud guards
- Safety: Front & rear lights, bike bell, reflective surfaces, mirror
- Spare parts – tubes, tire, spokes
- Racks, panniers, trailer, handle-bar basket, etc.
- Water bottle cages
- Able to distribute weight properly – essential for stability

# Loading a Bicycle

- Use panniers for cycling
  - Your backpack is for backpacking
- Put weight low on bike for stability
  - Low center of gravity = better stability
  - Heavier items at bottom of panniers
- Too much weight at back of bike causes wobbling & poor steering
  - Your weight is mostly over the back wheel
  - Add weight in front panniers first
- Practice first! Load your bike exactly as if you are touring, and go on a practice ride



# Loading a Bicycle (cont'd)

- Organize your stuff
  - Digging through all your bags for an item is a pain!
- Keep valuables in an easily-removed small bag
  - Grab it and go when you need to leave your bike
- “Space bag” type of travel bags work well to compress bulky items and keep them dry
- Don't carry what you're done using
  - Mail home items such as maps that you're done with