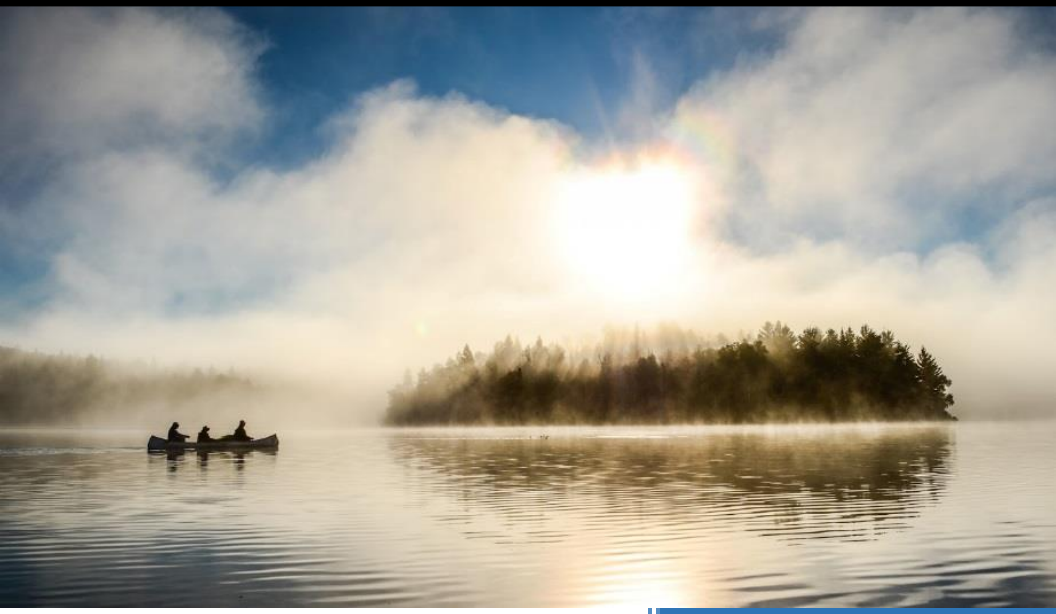
2020

Northern Tier High Adventure Program
Summer Participant Handbook



Contents

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE? 4
ADULT LEADERSHIP 7
RISK ADVISORY 7
PREPARE FOR HIGH ADVENTURE 7
TRIP ORGANIZATION 8
ELECT A CREW LEADER 8
SELECT YOUR TREK PROGRAM OPTIONS 9
TRIP PLANNING 10
WHAT GEAR IS NEEDED? 13
GEAR PROVIDED BY NORTHERN TIER 17
ARRIVAL AT BASE 19
HIT THE TRAIL 22
NORTHERN TIER POLICIES 26
WRAP UP YOUR ADVENTURE 29
NORTHERN TIER AWARDS 30

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Ely: Ee’ lee
Atikokan: At’ i coke’ can
Bissett: Beh set’
Quetico: Kwet’ i ko
Atikaki: At’ i käk’ ee
OKPIK: Ook’ pick



WELCOME TO NORTHERN TIER NATIONAL HIGH ADVENTURE!

NORTHERN TIER DELIVERS WILDERNESS ADVENTURE!
The mission of Northern Tier High Adventure Programs is to provide high quality character development experiences for all of Scouting's participants through challenging wilderness adventures - featuring expedition canoeing and extreme-temperature winter camping - in the rugged North Woods of Minnesota, Ontario and Manitoba.

Welcome to the Northern Tier National High Adventure Programs and the great North American Canoe Country. This region is associated with a rich history. The Fur Trade Era, from the late 1600s through the late 1800s, is certainly a colorful piece of our history. Several fur trading companies hired French-Canadian Voyageurs, a hearty breed of adventurers, to paddle birch bark canoes and haul trade goods and furs thousands of miles each summer by water and portage trail. This handbook is presented to **you, the modern Voyageur**, as a reference for the history and adventure of the Canoe Country, both past and present. We hope you are dreaming of your wilderness canoeing adventure and the thought of traveling the beautiful canoe country excites you.

Northern Tier operates three high adventure bases located in Ely, Minnesota; Atikokan, Ontario; and Bissett, Manitoba. From these facilities millions of acres of sky-blue lakes, meandering rivers, dense boreal forests and wetlands are available for paddling and portaging. The mystique of the wild outdoors and historical features will lure you to explore, to learn and to seek new challenges. Read and reread this handbook carefully, as it informs you of many details that will help you prepare for your trip. The Personal Equipment List is very important for you and your crew. Bring only the items mentioned and try to share as many items as possible amongst other crew members. Remember, you will be carrying everything you bring. Proper planning before your trip will assure you and your crew an enjoyable wilderness adventure!

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

To participate in Northern Tier National High Adventure programs, the participant **must be**

1) **A registered Boy Scout, Varsity Scout or Venturer,**
2) 14 years of age or 13 years old and completed 8th Grade upon arrival at Northern Tier**,** AND
3) **Be classified as a "swimmer" prior to arrival** (see next section for swimmer classification requirements).

In keeping with the policies of the Boy Scouts of America, registration and participation in Northern Tier National High Adventure programs is without regard to race, color or national origin. The above are minimum requirements. The National High Adventure Department of the BSA recommends that age, BSA membership and swimming ability not be the only criteria for determining participation on High Adventure expeditions. The following should also be considered:

1) Maturity
2) The ability to carry a heavy load (≥70 lbs.) over steep, muddy and rugged portages.
3) Camping/canoeing experience
4) Height/weight requirements
5) Physical condition

BE A SWIMMER

Everyone in your crew must be classified as a swimmer prior to arriving at Northern Tier. To qualify as a swimmer, you must be able to swim 100 yards (75 yards any forward stroke and 25 yards in a resting backstroke) and to rest by floating. The Swim Classification Form, sent to your advisor and available online at www.ntier.org, must be completed prior to your arrival verifying each and every participant is classified as a swimmer. **Non-swimmers and beginners cannot participate in a wilderness canoe trek.** It is the responsibility of the contingent, unit and/or crew leader to make sure all participants (including adults) are swimmers as indicated in the Safe Swim Defense Plan. **If you are not a swimmer, be sure to talk to your leader(s).**

SPECIAL NOTE:

It is Northern Tier policy to wear a life jacket, your "wet boots" and to follow the BSA Safe Swim Defense Plan anytime you are swimming.

GET A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND PARENTAL PERMISSION
All participants, youth and adult, MUST bring a current annual BSA Health and Medical Record. A blank BSA Health and Medical Record form is available at the Northern Tier website www.ntier.org. Be sure to provide your doctor Parts A, B, C and D of the form when you go for your physical exam. A physician must review part D, the risk advisory, prior to completing the form. Confirm that your physician has completed the form accurately prior to arrival at Northern Tier. A parent or legal guardian must complete the medical history and sign the medical form if you are under the age of 18. Every participant, youth and adult, must have a physical examination performed by a physician within 12 months of your expedition end date.

When you arrive at Northern Tier, your advisor will turn in all BSA Health and Medical Records for the duration of your trip. Keep a copy for your records. If anyone arrives without a medical form signed by a physician and a parent or legal guardian if under 18, your trek may be delayed for a day or longer until the situation is rectified. **The only medical form Northern Tier will accept is the Annual BSA Health and Medical Record.** Good physical condition is essential. Each participant in a Northern Tier expedition should not exceed the maximum acceptable weight for height in the table shown on the Annual BSA Health and Medical Record. Those who fall within the recommended weight limits are much more likely to have an enjoyable trek and avoid incurring injuries and health risks.

The following table shows the recommended weights for each height, as well as the maximum weight for that height.

Northern Tier requires that each participant not exceed the maximum weight on the table for their height. Northern Tier REQUIRES that you fall below the maximum (295 pounds) allowed weight for participation. Additionally, Northern Tier strongly recommends that no participant weigh less than 100 pounds. Smaller participants will have a very difficult time due to the strenuous nature of the trek and the heavy weight of items to portage.

Weight-to-Height Table **Northern Tier National High Adventure Programs**		
Height	Recommended Weight (pounds)	Maximum Weight (pounds)
******Participants weighing less than 100 pounds will have a very difficult time and are discouraged from attending.***		
5’ 0”	100 - 138	166
5’ 1”	101 - 143	172
5’ 2”	104 - 148	178
5’ 3”	107 - 152	183
5’ 4”	111 - 157	189
5’ 5”	114 - 162	195
5’ 6”	118 - 167	201
5’ 7”	121 - 172	207
5’ 8”	125 - 178	214
5’ 9”	129 - 185	220
5’ 10”	132 - 188	226
5’ 11”	136 - 194	233
6’ 0”	140 - 199	239
6’ 1”	144 - 205	246
6’ 2”	148 - 210	252
6’ 3”	152 - 216	260
6’ 4”	156 - 222	267
6’ 5”	160 - 228	274
6’ 6”	164 - 234	281
6’ 7” +	170 - 240	295
Maximum Allowed Weight ******No participants weighing more than 295 pounds will be allowed to participate.***		***295 pounds***

ADULT LEADERSHIP

Northern Tier upholds the youth protection and adult leadership requirements as defined in the Guide to Safe Scouting. A minimum of two registered adult leaders, both age 21 or older are required for each crew. There are no gender restrictions for leadership except that a co-ed crew must have both male and female leadership 21 years old or older. Each crew must present proof of adult leader training upon arrival. At least one adult must present proof of current training in the following: CPR, Wilderness First Aid, Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat and Weather Hazards. All adults must present proof of current Youth Protection Training.

RISK ADVISORY

Your safety is of the utmost importance to us. Northern Tier National High Adventure Programs have an outstanding safety record. The Boy Scouts of America and Northern Tier emphasize safety through education and strict adherence to established policies and procedures. The safety of your group is dependent upon your attention to these procedures as well as being physically fit, properly equipped and trained for the rigors of remote wilderness canoeing. Following these policies and procedures maximizes the potential for a safe and enjoyable experience for all involved. Parents, leaders and participants should be advised that despite our best attempts at risk management, it is not possible to remove ALL risk from a wilderness expedition.

For more information about possible risks at Northern Tier, see the *Advisor Planning Guide* at www.ntier.org.

PREPARE FOR HIGH ADVENTURE

Your adventure begins at home. Months before arriving at Northern Tier, you should begin planning and training. A famous explorer once said, "The key to successful planning is living the experience in advance." This guidebook has been developed to help you anticipate what to expect in order to better prepare yourself and your crew. The more thorough your planning is, the more successful your experience will be.

TRIP ORGANIZATION

Northern Tier uses the term "crew" to describe the group of Scouts/Venturers and adult advisors attending a Northern Tier canoe base. An organized crew quickly accomplishes its chores and has more time to enjoy canoe country. Ideally, you and your other crew members are organized before your arrival at Northern Tier. This will be easier if your crew is made up of members from your Troop or Venture Crew. If your crew is a part of a Council contingent and is made up of Scouts or Venturers from various Council units, Northern Tier recommends that the crew members have several organizational meetings and/or training outings to help crew members and leaders prepare for the canoe trip.

Your crew size will vary by the base you are attending:

- Ely - 6-8 participants
- Atikokan - 6-8 participants in the Quetico and 6-11 participants in the Crown Lands
- Bissett - 6-11 participants

In addition to the participants you are coming to Northern Tier with, your crew will be assigned an Interpreter, who will accompany you on your trip.

ELECT A CREW LEADER

Each crew should elect a crew leader from the youth members before beginning a trek. The crew leader is responsible for organizing and planning the crew's activities. He or she leads by example. This responsibility requires someone with leadership ability who is respected by all the crew members. The crew leader must be aware of the interests and capabilities of everyone in the crew.

ROLE OF YOUR ADULT ADVISOR

Your adult advisors will counsel and advise the crew leader and crew while letting the crew leader lead the crew. The advisor provides discipline should it be required and offers suggestions to help the crew leader. Your advisor is responsible for the safety and well-being of each crew member and if needed will be assisted by the Interpreter assigned to your crew.

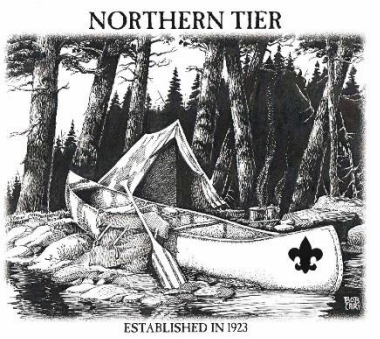
ROLE OF THE NORTHERN TIER STAFF MEMBER –THE INTERPRETER

When you arrive at Northern Tier, your crew will be greeted by a wilderness canoe counselor known as an Interpreter. The Interpreter will join your crew and stay with the group for the entire wilderness canoeing

expedition and lead you through the first day orientation/outfitting procedures before you hit the trail. The Interpreter is an adult male or female who has been trained as a BSA National High Adventure Base Staff member. The Interpreter provides training support, interprets outdoor skills and acts as a resource person to the crew leader, the crew and the adult advisors. In an emergency or any situation involving safety, the Interpreter will act in conjunction with the adult advisors. The Interpreter is not a "fishing guide" but acts as a resource person for the skills pertaining to Scout camping and wilderness canoeing. He or she is a specialist with the equipment and food carried on canoe trips. The Interpreter has been trained in the history of the canoe country and special safety practices to be observed on a wilderness canoe trip.

SELECT YOUR TREK PROGRAM OPTIONS

Before you arrive at Northern Tier, examine the program opportunities listed below. You will have the opportunity to do some of the following. Discuss with your other crew members and prioritize your top choices to discuss with your Interpreter upon arrival.



- **Fishing**
- **Swimming**
- **Ecology**
- **Observing Wildlife**
- **Star Gazing**
- **Photography**
- **Cooking and Baking**
- **Low Impact Camping**
- **Backcountry Navigation**
- **Historic Trail Award**
- **Float Plane Drop off/Pick Up (Canada Only)**
- **Lake Monitoring Program**
- **Geocaching**
- **Duty to God Program**
- **Extra Miler Emblems**

More information on awards can be found online at www.ntier.org/TripPlanning/Awards.aspx

TRIP PLANNING

Prior to arriving at Northern Tier your crew should answer the following questions:

1. How many nights is our trip?
2. How far do we want to paddle each day?
    a. The average crew paddles/portages approximately 2 to 3 mph
        i. Easy days will encompass 8 to 12 miles
        ii. Moderate days will be 13 to 19 miles
        iii. Difficult days will be 20 miles and above
3. Do we want to have a layover day (stay in a campsite 2 nights and a full day)?
4. Do we want to fish?
5. Which of Northern Tier's special awards do we want to earn?
    a. What's the priority?
    b. These awards can be found at www.ntier.org/TripPlanning/Awards.aspx
6. Do we want to try to avoid portages or challenge ourselves to overcome as many as possible?
7. Do we want to go on big lakes, small lakes, rivers or a combination?
8. Do we want to see waterfalls?
9. Do we want to see pictographs/petro glyphs?
10. Do we want to really get away from others, or embrace the other wilderness visitors?

The answers to these questions will be used to plan your trek on the day you arrive at Northern Tier.

GIVE YOUR PARENTS THE EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER AND YOUR NORTHERN TIER CREW NUMBER

For an emergency, it is best to call between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM and talk with a full time staff member. During off hours a duty officer will answer the emergency line. *An emergency message MUST include the full name and the Northern Tier Expedition Number.* Northern Tier will not be able to contact the person if they are on their trek; however the message will be attached to the crew file for delivery upon the person's return to base. No Collect Calls Will Be Accepted.

Telephones are available for use by participants at all 3 bases. These numbers are strictly for emergencies:

Ely Phone: 218.365.4811
Ely Fax: 218.365.3112

MAILING ADDRESSES FOR PARTICIPANTS

ELY BASE - You will be attending the Ely Base if your expedition number begins with "E." Mail for participants attending the Ely Base only should be addressed as shown below. Sending mail is not encouraged as it must be sent shortly after the person has left home to ensure receipt. All mail must have a return address so it can be returned to the sender if the letter arrives after the person has left for home.

Full Name and Crew Number
Northern Tier National High Adventure Base
14790 Moose Lake Road
Ely, MN 55731

ATIKOKAN AND BISSETT BASES - If your crew number begins with an "A", "F" (for Fishing trek), or
"K" (for Kayaking trek) – you will be attending the Atikokan Base. If the crew number begins with a "B", you will be attending the Bissett Base.

Mail delivery to Canada takes a very long time. Please do not plan to have mail sent to Atikokan or Bissett - It will probably arrive long after you have already departed for home.

REVIEW CAMPER INSURANCE COVERAGE
The Northern Tier fee includes accident and sickness insurance coverage. This applies for your travel to and from Northern Tier as well as while you are on your canoe trek. This policy is secondary to a family policy. Insurance information of the family policy should be noted on the BSA Health and Medical Record. A BSA *Camper's Accident and Sickness Insurance* pamphlet is available at www.ntier.org.

SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS
Use your BSA Handbook, Fieldbook and Canoeing Merit Badge Book to sharpen the following skills:

- Assigning Duties
- Backcountry Cooking
- Using Map and Compass
- Being Physically Fit
- Canoeing Skills
    - Trimming Your Load
    - Paddling a Canoe
    - Avoid Swamping
    - React to Swamping
    - Lifting/Flipping a Canoe
    - Wet Foot Portaging
    - Portaging

WHAT GEAR IS NEEDED?

The following checklist is for you and your crew to help you ensure that you have everything you need for an enjoyable and successful Northern Tier Trek. Most items may be purchased through the Northern Tier Trading Post Store at www.northerntiertradingpost.org.

REQUIRED Personal Gear		
Clothing		
Quantity	**Item**	**Special Notes**
1	Pair of Boots**	*All participants are required to wear boots that have full ankle coverage, a rugged stitched or vulcanized sole and drainage at the instep. Boots should not be waterproof. If you are unsure if the boots you are planning to bring meet this requirement please feel free to contact us prior to your arrival. Crews arriving with inadequate footwear will be asked to purchase boots in the trading post prior to departure on water. The health and safety of our participants is of utmost importance to us, for this reason there are no exceptions to the boot requirement.*
1	Pair of Camp Shoes	All participants are required to bring closed-toe/closed-heel camp shoes with hard soles, such as lightweight sneakers.
1	Rain Jacket**	*All participants are required to pack a quality rain jacket with a hood. Ensure that your rain gear is waterproof, not just water resistant. Ponchos are not acceptable and are very dangerous in the event of a capsized canoe*
2	Shirts**	Long-sleeved, Lightweight
2	Pants**	Quick Dry – recommend Zip Off Legs
3	Pair of Socks**	Synthetic or Wool – NO Cotton
2	Pair of Underwear**	Recommend Synthetic, Quick Dry
1	Hat**	Broad Rimmed or Baseball Style
1	Jacket**	Lightweight Fleece
1	Hat**	Knit/Stocking Cap
1	Clean/Dry Clothes	For wearing on base and to and from Northern Tier for Travel
1	Bathing Suit	For wear in the Sauna
1	Flip Flops/Sandals	For wear in the shower – these are NOT permitted on trail

1	Uniform	BSA field or activity uniform for wear on base
Other Personal Gear		
1	Sleeping Bag	*All participants should bring a sleeping bag that is compact, synthetic, lightweight and rated to 35°F with a compression style stuff sack.*
1	Waterproof stuff sack**	25-30 Liter dry bag for clothing and other gear – this will be packed in our gear packs
1	Sleeping Pad**	Closed Cell or self-inflating foam
1-2	"Camp Towel"**	Bandanna, Buff or Synthetic Camp Towel
1	Belt or Suspenders**	
1	Toothbrush**	
1	Mess Kit**	Plastic or Metal: 12 oz Bowl, 8-12 oz Cup/Mug, spoon/spork
1	Water Bottle**	1 Liter, wide mouthed with Carabiner Style Clip
1	Headlamp**	
1	Whistle	
1	Lip Balm**	
1	Sunglasses**	With keeper strap
2	Prescription Glasses	IF needed with keeper strap
2	Personal Medications	If needed – 2 supplies to carry in separate locations
	Personal Toiletries	
1	Bathing Towel	For on base showering needs
OPTIONAL Personal Gear		
1	Camera	With extra batteries and waterproof box
1	Head Net**	For mosquitos
1	Long Underwear**	For cool nights and mornings
1	Rain Pants**	Could double as second pair of pants
1	Book **	For Reading
1	Journal**	For personal reflection
** Items marked with a double asterisk are available to purchase at www.northerntiertradingpost.org		

REQUIRED Crew Gear		
Quantity	**Item**	**Special Notes**
1	Small Pocket Knife**	1 Knife per Canoe (3-4 total)
1	Small Compass**	1 Compass per Canoe (3-4 total)
1	Map Case**	1 Map Case Per Canoe (3-4 total)
1	Set of Maps**	1 Set of Maps Per Canoe – ***Do not purchase your maps prior to arrival – we help you pick the best set of maps for your route upon arrival.***
1-2	Sunscreen**	1-2 bottles per crew – SPF 15 or greater – no aerosol cans
1-2	Bug Repellent**	1-2 bottles per crew – High Deet content recommended – no aerosol cans
1	Toothpaste**	1 Tube per crew is recommended
1	Medicated Foot Powder**	1 Bottle per crew is recommended
1	Crew First Aid Kit	Complete list is outlined at http://www.ntier.org/filestore/NorthernTier/pdf/FirstAidKit.pdf
OPTIONAL Crew Gear		
	Fishing Poles	Fishing Equipment is available to check out. Crews are allowed 1-2 poles per crew.
	Fishing Tackle**	Limited fishing tackle is available to check out for each crew. You may want to bring some of your favorite. Make sure it is lightweight and compact.
1	Repair Kit	*Multi-tool, duct tape, small sewing kit*
1	Binoculars	
1	Fillet Knife**	
** Items marked with a double asterisk are available to purchase at www.northerntiertradingpost.org		

⊗ ⊗ ⊗ What Not to Bring ⊗ ⊗ ⊗		
⊗	SPOT Satellite Messengers or other Emergency Beacon Devices	Northern Tier provides all necessary Emergency Communications devices and manages all emergencies in conjunction with local authorities. All crews will be asked to lock any such devices up with their valuables prior to departure on water. These devices are not permitted on the trail.
⊗	Canoe Chairs that clip or strap into canoes.	These damage factory canoe seats and make portaging difficult. Standard Crazy Creek style camp chairs may be brought for use in camp sites and can double as a sleeping pad.
⊗	Electronic Music, Game or Video Devices	The beautiful wilderness of Northern Minnesota, Southern Ontario and Manitoba are the reason you're at Northern Tier, right? Enjoy it!

Cell Phones	Northern Tier provides an emergency communication device for each crew on trail, it is unnecessary for crews to bring cell phones for use as a communication device (virtually no cell reception). However, we do recognize that many people use their cell phones as their cameras and this is permitted. We would request that you leave them in airplane mode and enjoy the Wilderness for what it is. We would still recommend using a crew camera over a cell phone.

GEAR PROVIDED BY NORTHERN TIER

- Portage Packs w/Liner Bags (1 for every 3 people)
- Food Box(es) and Pack(s) w/Liner Bag(s)
- 1 Crew Equipment Box and Pack
- Tents (2-, 4- and 5-man as needed)
- 1 Dining Fly w/Ridge Line and Stakes
- Parachute Cord
- 1 Shovel
- 1 Folding Saw
- 2 Bear Ropes and 1 Pulley/Ring
- 1 Fire Grate
- Dromedary Water System
- 2 Stoves, fuel bottles, and fuel
- 1 Paddle/person
- 1 Life Jacket/person
- 1 Seat Cushion for middle passenger/canoe
- 1 Emergency Radio or Satellite Phone w/waterproof box
- 1 Utensil Kit
- 1 Slotted Spoon
- 1 Regular Spoon
- 1 Metal Spatula
- 1 Nylon Spatula
- 1 Spreader Knife
- 1 Whisk
- 1 Pair Hot Pot Pliers
- 1 Soap Kit
- Dish Soap, Sanitizer Tablets and Scrubbies
- Hand Sanitizer
- Stove Oil
- Strike Anywhere Matches
- 1 Polar Pure bottle/canoe (for water purification)
- Cooking Equipment
- Cooking Pots (8, 6, 4, 3 and 1 quart sizes, percolator, griddle available)
- 1 Bakepacker and Baking Liner Pans
- 1 Measuring Cup
- 1 Cutting Board
- Canoes (one canoe per three people). Lightweight canoes are available in Ely and Atikokan by reservation (extra fees apply).
- Full Trail Food Outfitting - 3 balanced meals per day and:
  - Spice Kit with a wide variety of spices and seasonings available.
  - Condiments
  - Variety of hot and cold drink mixes
  - Supplemental Baking/Cooking Items (Bannock, Fish Fry, Sugar, Popcorn)
- Toilet Tissue
- Fishing Equipment (Ely only, available on a first-come first served basis.
- Fishing treks in Atikokan are fully outfitted with the necessary fishing equipment).
- GPS Units (available on a first-come first served basis).

Be aware that you are embarking on a rugged trip. Be cautious of advice from people who were lucky enough to travel the canoe country on a nice weekend, wore shorts and sandals and perhaps traveled ten miles from their vehicle. Your trip will be more adventurous! You will travel in all kinds of weather and will probably average over 10 miles/day for 6 to 9 days. ***Northern Tier recommends that each individual write their name and crew number with a permanent marker on their clothes, uniforms, and personal equipment. This will help in reclaiming lost and found items.***

CAMERA

Although optional, a camera is rewarding to record memorable experiences and beautiful scenes. Some crews select a crew photographer who takes shots for everyone. Another weight saving idea is for several crew members to share a camera. Not every crew member needs a camera. Don't forget additional batteries and memory cards. Do not plan to use a phone as a camera.

MONEY

Campers spend an average of $150.00 each in the Northern Tier National High Adventure Trading Post. If major items such as fleeces, vests, boots, paddles, etc., are desired, more money will be needed.

- If travelling to the bases in Atikokan or Bissett, only Canadian Currency is accepted in the trading post. Please plan to stop and exchange money on your travels to Canada.

LOOK SHARP EN ROUTE

Wear your Scout or Venture uniform proudly! You are members of the Boy Scouts of America, the greatest youth organization in the world. A properly uniformed, sharp appearing, well-mannered crew makes a lasting impression on people who observe you. Use the buddy system to keep track of everyone.



ARRIVAL AT BASE

DAY ONE

The afternoon of your arrival will be busy! Please make sure that you arrive on base between 1 and 2 PM. Be prepared for the following:

- Meet your Interpreter
- Complete your first portage! Carry personal and group gear to your crew's assigned cabin or tent (may be up to a ¼ mile hike). Do not pack in roller luggage, it is a rugged trail to your cabin. Pack in a backpack or duffel bag. If you plan to store your gear in a Northern Tier locker, make sure you use a frameless pack so they collapse into the locker.
- Medical Screening of each individual
- Crew Check In (presentation of paperwork, health forms, and copies of your certifications) – see advisors guide for more information.
- Gear and food outfitting
- Route Planning
- An Interpreter led shake-down of group and personal gear
- Dinner
- Orientation presentation and Vespers Service
- Crew Photo
- Visit the Trading Post

Check-in will be completed the afternoon of your arrival. Crews arriving after 2:00 will not be able to complete these tasks and will be delayed in getting on the water the next day. We cannot accommodate early arrivals at Northern Tier, if your crew arrives before the 1:00 check in time, we ask that you wait in the parking lot and your staff will be there by 1:00 to greet you.

DAY TWO

Breakfast will be served the next morning. Your Interpreter will lead you through any additional preparations which will include:

- Canoe Check Out
- Food Check Out
- Final Gear Check Out
- Store personal items in lockers or vehicles

The efficient crew will be on water by 10:00 am.

NOTE: Northern Tier High Adventure trail food is by necessity a high-carbohydrate, high caloric diet. It contains wheat, milk products, sugar, corn syrup and artificial coloring/flavoring. If an individual is allergic to some food products or requires a special diet, suitable trail food must be purchased at home and brought to Northern Tier.

There is no reduction in Northern Tier fees for individuals who bring their own food. Northern Tier tries to accommodate food substitutions for vegetarian, medical (including allergies) and religious reasons. However this is with items we normally use and have in stock.

Prior arrangements must be made in writing by letter or email directed to Northern Tier for all three bases. A 'Dietary Restrictions' request form is located online at www.ntier.org/Food/SpecialDiet. Please make sure to fill out and submit this form 30 days prior to arrival.

VISIT THE TRADING POST

- **ELY CREWS:** Before departing on your trek you will want to visit the Trading Post to purchase those last minute items. Many of the items not purchased back home may be found in our Trading Post. Now is the time to purchase items needed for the trail - there is no place to buy items once you start your trip. We encourage you to purchase your fishing licenses online before you arrive.
- **ATIKOKAN CREWS:** The Atikokan Trading Post will carry a few trail items, Northern Tier and Atikokan souvenir items, trail maps and snack foods. Necessary trail items are best purchased prior to your arrival at the Atikokan base. We encourage you to purchase your fishing licenses online before you arrive.
- **BISSETT CREWS:** The Bissett Base will carry a few trail items, Northern Tier and Bissett base souvenir items, and trail maps. Necessary trail items are best purchased prior to your arrival at the Bissett base. Since the base facility is located within the town limits of Bissett, there is one small store at hand to purchase additional souvenirs, Manitoba fishing licenses, trail items and snacks.
- **NORTHERN TIER ONLINE STORE:** Trail equipment and Northern Tier souvenir items are available for purchase through the Northern Tier on-line store, found at www.northerntiertradingpost.org

ROUTE PLANNING

- Your Interpreter will meet with you and your crew to plan a custom made experience based on the desires and abilities of your crew. The crew leader is responsible for representing the interest of the entire crew according to the priorities you and your crew have selected from the **TREK PROGRAM OPTIONS** and answering the **TRIP PLANNING** questions in this booklet. A written itinerary is prepared showing when and where you plan to camp. One copy of the itinerary is carried by the crew and one copy is kept at base in case of emergency.

SHAKEDOWN YOUR GEAR

- In a place designated by your Interpreter, you will unpack everything. Your Interpreter will review each item necessary for your trek and demonstrate the best method of packing the items in the 3-person portage packs. Store surplus gear and uniforms in your vehicle or crew locker/storage area if you did not arrive in your own vehicles.

FIRST NIGHT MEAL

- Your first meal at any of the bases will be dinner the evening you arrive.

FIRST NIGHT ORIENTATION

- You and your crew will attend an opening evening program to explain the regulations of the wilderness area you will be paddling in. A short non-denominational religious service will be offered after this.

PACK YOUR GEAR

- Northern Tier Provides a Portage Pack in which you will carry personal gear for up to 3 people. Your tent(s), sleeping bags (in compression style stuff sack), sleeping pads, dry shoes and 25-30 liter stuff sacks or dry sacks with your remaining gear will be packed into this pack. Each pack comes with a plastic liner which when packed properly (not over packed) will serve as a first line of defense to keep your personal equipment dry. If you are not using a waterproof stuff sack for your clothes and personal items, packing them into zip closure style freezer bags within your stuff sack provides additional protection. When packing these portage packs

plan to pack them tall and narrow with heavier items toward the top of your pack and closest to your body to get the weight over your bone structure so your muscles do not tire easily. Remember to pack items you may need during the day so they are easily accessible. Items like this may include, your crew first aid kit, maps, compass, sun screen, camera, and rain jackets.

- Do not pack aerosol cans (unless bug repellent or medication) or glass jars because they are bulky and prone to break or empty their contents and are also not allowed in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness or Quetico Provincial Park.

A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

- Following the last orientation session in preparation for your trip, it is best to return to your overnight accommodations for a good night's sleep. Tomorrow you hit the trail!

HIT THE TRAIL

- **FOLLOW BUDDY SYSTEM**
  - As you are canoeing or portaging, **always keep your crew together** and **s**tay within hearing and visual distance. The Buddy System is a part of the BSA Safety Afloat policy. The lead canoe sets a steady pace that allows everyone else to keep up comfortably and makes sure the crew travels in the proper direction. The sweep, or end canoe, calls a halt when anyone needs to stop. This is done by passing the word to the canoe in front of you until everyone gets the message. Staying together is safer, avoids anyone becoming lost, promotes teamwork and looks sharp. The crew leader is responsible for making sure it happens. Normally the crew leader should be positioned about midway in the group, to monitor the progress and morale of everyone else. The crew leader decides when to take a rest stop, where to eat lunch, when to seek shelter from bad weather and when to stop or turn back with the counsel of the Interpreter and an advisor. Traveling in a canoe or portaging after dark is not recommended except in an emergency.

- **SELECTING A CAMPSITE**
  - Do you know what to look for? Consider the three W's: water, wind and widow-makers. Water will definitely be convenient to your campsite. Wind can cause great difficulty, particularly if you pitch your tents too close to a large body of water where they are vulnerable. Choose a location that is sheltered by trees, shrubs, large boulders or a geographical feature. Before you pitch your tent, look up for anything that might come crashing down. If you build a fire, check for overhead limbs that may catch flame and locate your fire away from them. Remember, the best campsites are found, not made.

- **MEALS ON THE TRAIL AND OFFERING THANKS**
  - All meals, starting with lunch on the day you start canoeing through lunch on the day you return to base, will be carried on the trail and cooked/prepared by you and your crew members. Crews are encouraged to give thanks before eating meals on the trail. The Wilderness Grace is particularly appropriate.

WILDERNESS GRACE

For food, for raiment, for life
and opportunity,
For sun and rain, for water and
portage trails,
For friendship and fellowship,
We thank Thee, Oh, Lord.
Amen.



- **FISHING ON THE TRAIL**
  - Some of the most spectacular game fishing in North America is available in the waters covered by Northern Tier. Fishing can highlight your high adventure experience and supplement your trail food menu. Decide if you are going to fish before you leave home so you can prepare for it. Bring your rod and reel, a small plastic tackle box, fillet knife, sharpener, pliers with a side cutter and a pocket knife. For those crews that do not have their own fishing gear, a small amount of equipment is available to borrow from Northern Tier (Ely base only). The *Tips for Fishing By Canoe and Canoe Country Nature Guidebook,* written for Northern Tier by Bob Cary, will describe the types of fish you can fish for, the types

of lures to use, the types of equipment to bring, how to fillet a fish, knots for fishing and information on catch and release. You can download a copy at www.ntier.org. Whether you are in Minnesota, Ontario or Manitoba, fishing licenses are available for purchase either in the trading post (fishing licenses are not available in the Bissett Trading Post), ranger station, resort or store. ***Remember the most efficient way to get your fishing license is to purchase it online prior to your arrival.*** **The types and prices of fishing licenses for Minnesota, Ontario and Manitoba can be found online at these websites:**

Minnesota Fishing Licenses: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/
Ontario Fishing Licenses: http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/
Manitoba Fishing Licenses: https://www.gov.mb.ca/.

- Many crews come to canoe country to fish. If you are planning to fish while on your canoe trip, we want you to do it safely. If fishing from a canoe, only have 2 people in the canoe. The buddy system of 2 canoes must be followed as well as BSA Youth Protection Policies. If fishing from shore, be careful with casting in the vicinity of other people. When not fishing, make a policy concerning the storage of hooks and lures while in camp and while traveling. Enforcing such policies will prevent an injury to someone walking by a lure and getting snagged, or by stepping or sitting on a lure.

- **LEAVE NO TRACE**
  - The wilderness areas used by Northern Tier crews are all on public lands managed by federal or provincial government agencies. The campsites in these areas are all open to public use and are strictly on a first come first served basis. Wherever your crew camps, you are responsible for maintaining the wild character of the wilderness area you are camping in.
    - Keep your impact to a minimum and leave each site cleaner than you found it. Carry out all garbage and trash that you carried into the wild.
    - Crews also help by cleaning up sites littered by other campers. This helps Northern Tier and the Boy Scouts of America maintain the respect of the government agencies and represents a service project in keeping with the BSA principle of good citizenship and our own slogan: “Do a good turn daily.”

        - The crew leader makes sure your fire is extinguished, using the "white ash and cold to the touch test". ***Thoroughly police your campsite before you depart.***

    - Help preserve the beauty of the North Woods and respect others using the wilderness by pledging to conduct yourself in an exemplary manner by following the principles of Leave No Trace. If you want to know more details you can purchase the Lakes Region Leave No Trace booklet from the Northern Tier Trading Post or visit the LNT website at www.lnt.org.

KEEPING YOURSELF HEALTY AND SAFE ON THE TRAIL

Strict adherence to proper health and safety practices is crucial. You are responsible to yourself to keep safe and healthy, but this is also a crew responsibility. Failure to purify water or to thoroughly rinse dishes may affect everyone in the crew. Read these trail practices to keep you and your crew strong, safe and healthy. KNOW WILDERNESS FIRST AID SKILLS and CPR. Every Northern Tier crew MUST have an adult advisor certified in Wilderness First Aid and CPR. Ailments most commonly requiring treatment are: sunburn, cuts (all types), sprains, blisters, burns, headache, stomachache, constipation, diarrhea and embedded fish hooks. Stock your first aid kit with supplies to handle these problems. Be aware of anyone in the crew who has a medical condition. Every injury or illness must be recorded in the base first aid log. While on the trail, your Interpreter will fill out a report to be posted in the base medical log upon your return.

- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Care for your feet:
    - While you are canoeing and portaging, sound, healthy feet are a must. Cut your toenails short and square; don't round the corners. We recommend wearing two pairs of socks in your boots to help prevent blisters. Your feet will be wet throughout the day while you're paddling due to the Wet Foot technique but be sure to dry them thoroughly, air them out and apply foot powder liberally to prevent trench foot and other problems. Put on your dry camp socks and your camp shoes as soon as you can when you get to your campsite. Due to the sharp rocks, lost fishing tackle and the potential for broken glass. DO NOT WALK AROUND THE

CAMPSITE OR GO SWIMMING BAREFOOT. The only time you should be barefoot is in your sleeping bag.

- Know and be prepared to practice First Aid for the following ailments:
  - Bugs, bee stings and other insect bites.
  - Hypothermia
  - Sunburn
  - Heat Exhaustion
  - Heat Stroke
  - Dehydration
- Prevent Accidents
  - Most Accidents involve horseplay. Fatigue, hunger and mild hypothermia or dehydration may impair a crew member's performance and judgment. Common causes of accidents include rock throwing, improper use of knife and axe, getting snagged by a fish hook, running through campsites barefoot and carelessness around fires. Maintain crew discipline and practice safety at all times to avoid injuries from accidents. Always use the principles of Safe Swim Defense when swimming and Safety Afloat when on the water. Always wear your wet boots and PFD while swimming, and always wear shoes in camp.
- Avoid Storms and Lightning
- Stay Put if Confused or Lost
- Purify All Drinking Water
- Wash and Rinse Dishes Thoroughly

NORTHERN TIER POLICIES

- Secure Your Food: Bears, chipmunks, mice and other rodents are fond of trail food. Hanging your food and 'smellables' at night is necessary. Remember, perfumed items (toothpaste, soaps, chapstick, etc.) may smell like food. Your Interpreter will advise you on what to do and how to do it. Whether on the trail or on base, do not take food into any tent or cabin.
- Respect Wildlife: We are visitors in the wilderness – please be responsible and courteous guests. Do not bother or provoke wildlife. Animals should be enjoyed from a distance and should never be fed.
- Purify All Drinking Water: All water from all natural sources - including springs, streams and lakes must be purified by bringing it to a rolling boil, treated with chemical purifier or filtered.
- Wash and Rinse Dishes Thoroughly: Protect the health of your crew by thoroughly washing, rinsing and sanitizing dishes. Let

dishes and utensils air dry. The dirty dishwater should be disposed of at least 200 feet behind the campsite and at least 200 feet from any water source.

- No Climbing Allowed: Rock climbing, rappelling and tree climbing are not permitted. BSA regulations require advanced training and equipment which is not available for use on your trek.
- Swimming and Diving: All swimming and water activities must be done in accordance with the BSA Safe Swim Defense policy. In addition, wet boots, a lifejacket and a swimsuit or shorts must be worn by all swimmers at all times.
- Diving: Diving is prohibited at Northern Tier per the BSA Safe Swim Defense policy. Therefore, all entry into the water must be feet first or by wading into the water. Jumping feet first into the water is allowed from rocks or ledges no greater than five feet above the surface of the water, if the water is clear and the depth of the water is 10-12 feet deep. Lifejackets must be worn at all times.
- Cliff Jumping: Jumping into the water from any height greater than 5 feet above the surface of the water is prohibited.
- Whitewater Policy: The running of rapids, whitewater or waterfalls is prohibited. All Northern Tier crews will portage around all falls, rapids, fast water, etc. During times of unusually high water it will be necessary to be very careful and watchful while traveling.
- Rock Throwing: Rock throwing is prohibited.
- Solo Canoeing: There will be no solo canoeing. There must be a minimum of two canoes at all times with 2 canoeists in each canoe.
- Boots and Shoes: You must wear boots or shoes in all wilderness trail campsites, while canoeing, swimming, fishing, etc. Bare feet and under-protected feet are a major cause of foot injuries.
- Tobacco: The use of tobacco is never permitted within the line of sight of youth. No smoking is permitted in any Northern Tier building or vehicle. Each base has a single established tobacco use area.
- Alcohol and Drugs: Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or misuse of prescribed drugs is prohibited. Groups or individuals found in violation of this national policy of the Boy Scouts of America will be sent home immediately, as arranged with the council office or parent.
- Firearms and Fireworks: Shooting firearms are not allowed at Northern Tier. Do not bring firearms or archery equipment with

you. Fireworks are a safety hazard and are prohibited by Northern Tier National High Adventure. Leave them at home.

- Youth Protection Policy and Abuse: Boy Scouts of America's Youth Protection Policies must be adhered to. No one-on-one activities between youth and adults are allowed. The BSA two deep leader policies must be followed. No youth and adults are allowed in the same tents (except family members). Physical, sexual or emotional abuse (including hazing) of a camper by his or her peers or by adult leaders is unacceptable anywhere. Reporting of abuse is the law. The local, county, state or provincial authorities as well as the BSA Council representatives will be contacted if abuse is suspected.
- Forest Fires: Our forests are a beautiful and valuable heritage. If you spot a fire or think you have, report it to your Interpreter, who will report it to the base director by radio or phone. Your crew should not attempt to fight wildfires and should quickly leave the area. Because of the wilderness status, some of the areas which have naturally occurring fires may be left to burn naturally. Other man-caused fires may be extinguished. Trained fire fighters will monitor or extinguish the fires accordingly.
- Fires on Base: A fire on any of the Northern Tier program base facilities needs to be reported to the base director or staff person immediately. If the fire alarm is activated, all crews are to report to the parking area of the base facility. Each base has a fire guard plan posted.



WRAP UP YOUR ADVENTURE

Plan to return to base in the afternoon (between 1 and 3 pm) of your final day. Atikokan and Bissett return time may vary due to vehicle shuttle and float plane arrangements. Crews are required to spend their last night on base to get a good night's sleep before traveling.

- **CLEAN AND CHECK IN CREW EQUIPMENT**
  - At your last campsite scrub your pots and pans to get all the black off and clean other equipment thoroughly. Upon arrival back at base you will check all your gear in to the Bay Post or equipment issue area. The staff will check each item for damages other than normal wear and you will be charged for any damages and for lost items before your departure. Your advisor will also be able to pick up the car keys and valuables while in the equipment area (Ely) or shortly thereafter at the Canadian bases. After equipment check-in, you will have time to take a hot shower and sauna and change clothes before dinner.

- **VISIT TRADING POST**

- **EVALUATE YOUR TRIP**
  - Your crew leader and advisor are asked to complete a written evaluation form. Many constructive suggestions are implemented as a result of these post trip evaluations. Your medical forms will be returned to you with the blank evaluation forms.

- **RECEIVE AWARDS**
  - Meeting the challenge of a Northern Tier National High Adventure experience is worthy of recognition. An emblem is awarded to every successful participant to wear on the right pocket of the Scout uniform. These awards are not for sale, they can only be earned. Be sure to visit the Trading Post for any other awards that you worked on while you were on the trail.

- **DINNER AND EVENING PROGRAM**
  - After eating dinner there will be a closing campfire program. The type of program will vary depending on the base attended. After the program and/or another visit to the Trading Post it will be time to get a good night's sleep for the trip home.

- **HEAD FOR HOME**
  - A hot breakfast will be served to you, after which you are ready to begin your journey home.

NORTHERN TIER AWARDS

Northern Tier offers a wide variety of patches that can be earned over the course of your trek. A brief synopsis of each patch or program is offered here.

Mileage Awards



At the heart and soul of Northern Tier's mileage award program is the BSA's national 50-Miler Award. All crews participating in a Northern Tier expedition should try to earn this award. What better time than during a BSA National High Adventure program?



- The 50-Miler Award is presented to each qualifying individual for satisfactory participation in an approved trip.

In addition, special Northern Tier Mileage Awards are available for subsequent miles – in 25 mile increments up to 200 – traveled while on your trip. Patches and plaques are available from the Trading Post.

Northern Tier GEO Cacher Award



Every participant at Northern Tier should be capable of navigating canoe country by the end of their trip. Our GEO CACHER Program provides an extra challenge to navigating using a GPS unit. GEO Caching at Northern Tier is a little bit different than what most think of when considering the activity. Due to the nature of the wilderness area in which we travel we must utilize natural and historical points of interest as our "caches." One might think of the activity at Northern Tier as more of a navigational scavenger hunt.

Through completing this program your crew will be able to visit sites of historical interest such as locations mentioned in Alexander McKenzie's diary, a 1926 Buick Roadster, pictographs and logging era points of interest as well as sites of geographical and natural interest such as rock formations and the oldest cedar tree in Minnesota.

Northern Tier Lake Monitoring Program



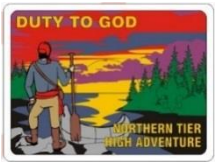
Our Lake Monitoring Program provides your crew with an experience to learn about the water quality in the lakes of Northern Minnesota and Northwestern Ontario and how it changes. It also provides a community service opportunity for your Scouts as the data collected is used by government agencies and scholars to monitor water clarity and provide an assessment of suspended material in the water (often algae). Long term monitoring provides scientists with valuable data to detect trends in water quality and detect signs of degradation to a lake.

BSA National Historic Trails Award



Due to the rich historical significance of canoe country, Northern Tier expeditions are a great time to earn this National BSA award. To earn the award, members of your unit must plan and participate in a historic activity. A unit historic activity requires members to locate a historical trail (which are plentiful in the areas Northern Tier paddles), hike or camp 2 days or 1 night along the trail, and plan or stage a historic pageant or public event to instruct the greater community about the trail. All of these requirements can be accomplished at Northern Tier.

Northern Tier Duty To God Program



While at Northern Tier, you will encounter divine handiwork on many occasions. The Duty to God program will help you reflect on these special moments. This popular program requires an on base religious service, participation in at least three devotionals while on your trek, and the leading of grace at a campfire meal.

Trail of Courage



The program allows conversations to take place within each crew. These conversations focus on the seven parts of the program: Become personally fit, Eat a nutritious diet, Exercise, Be tobacco free and not smoke or use smokeless products, Live free of drug and alcohol habits, Learn the seven cancer danger signs, Live the Scout Oath and Law.

Each Interpreter is asked to coach the Crew Leader to guide conversations during the crew's trek that focus on each of the seven parts of the program. On the last night of the trek the Crew Leader will encourage the crew to take the pledge and committing to the seven parts of the program.

The recognition for making the pledge and participating in the program includes a Trail of Courage patch and the Boys' Life Personal Pledge Card. These items are available to the crew free of charge and can be picked up at the Northern Tier Store by submitting your crew pledge card.

Triple Crown and Grand Slam of High Adventure Award



Scouts and Scouters who have participated in at least one program at each of the three national high-adventure bases operated by the Boy Scouts of American (Northern Tier, Philmont, Florida Sea Base and Summit) can earn the Triple Crown patch and certificate. To qualify, you must earn a high-adventure program participant emblem (patch) from any of the three national high-adventure bases or all four bases to earn the Grand Slam.

An application must then be submitted with fees for the patch and certificate. The application may be found on the Northern Tier website at http://www.ntier.org/TripleCrown.aspx.

Note: To earn the Triple Crown, you must complete each high adventure through the Scouting program. For example, canoeing the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness or Quetico through another outfitter other than Northern Tier will not qualify.

UP NORTH

Up North is a certain way the wind feels on your face and the way an old wool shirt feels on your back. It's the peace that comes over you when you sit down to read one of your old trip journals, or the anticipation that bubbles inside when you start sorting through your tackle box in the spring.

Up North is the smell of a Duluth pack hanging in your basement and the sound of pots clinking across the lake. It's a raindrop clinging to a pine needle and the dancing light of a campfire on the faces of friends.

Up North is a lone set of cross-country ski tracks across a wilderness lake and wood smoke rising from a cabin chimney. It's bunchberries in June, blueberries in July and wild rice in September.

Each of us has an Up North. It's a time and place far from the here and now. It's a map on the wall, a dream in the making, a tugging at one's soul. For those who feel the tug, who make the dream happen, who put the map in the packsack and go, the world is never quite the same again.

We have been Up North. And part of us always will be.

