



Introduction to Backpacking

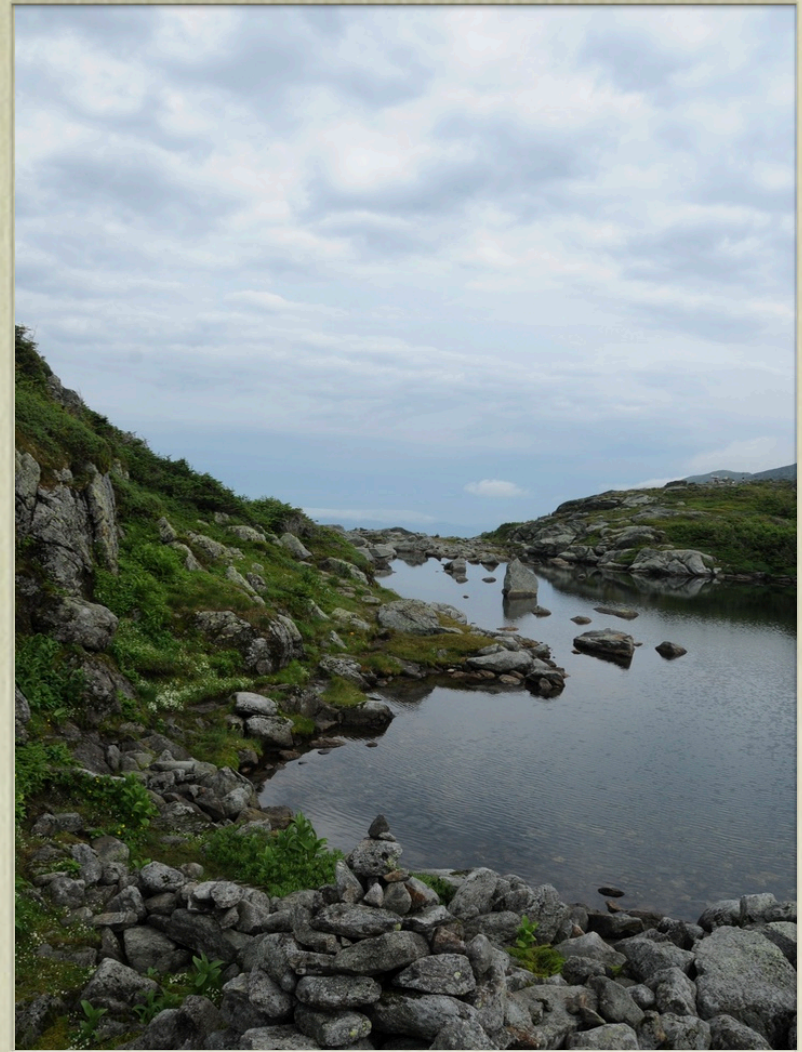
Narragansett Chapter

Welcome

- Who is teaching this stuff?
- What are you looking to get out of this workshop?
- Why is it a good thing that you're here?

AGENDA (8am-12pm)

- Logistics & Intros
- Preparation for Backpacking
- Environmental Assessment
- Campsite
- Equipment
- Food
- Cooking
- Clothing
- First Aid/Emergencies
- Wrapup/Questions
- Equipment/Gear Display



What is Backpacking?

- Hiking a certain distance with a backpack containing gear/food to make you self sufficient for staying one night or multiple nights in the outdoors



Benefits

- Physical
- Social
- Personal
- Connection to nature



Preparation for Backpacking - Fitness

- A good level of fitness is essential for injury prevention and trip enjoyment
- Your goal
 - To increase your endurance and stamina so that you are confident that you can carry a weighted pack for a certain distance, in various weather conditions, types of terrain and elevations
- Best way to get in backpacking shape is to start hiking with weighted pack
 - Increase your distances, vary terrain, types of weather and vary the weight of your pack

Preparation for Backpacking - Fitness(cont.)

- **Other considerations:**
 - Add strength training to your cardio
 - Lunges, squats & burpees
 - Multi muscle group arm exercises
 - Walking using incline on treadmill
- Always be sure to stretch prior and after exercising

Preparation for Backpacking - Skills

- Map & Compass
- Water treatment
- Making a fire
- First Aid
- Learn from friends and AMC groups



Preparation for Backpacking - Risk Mgmt

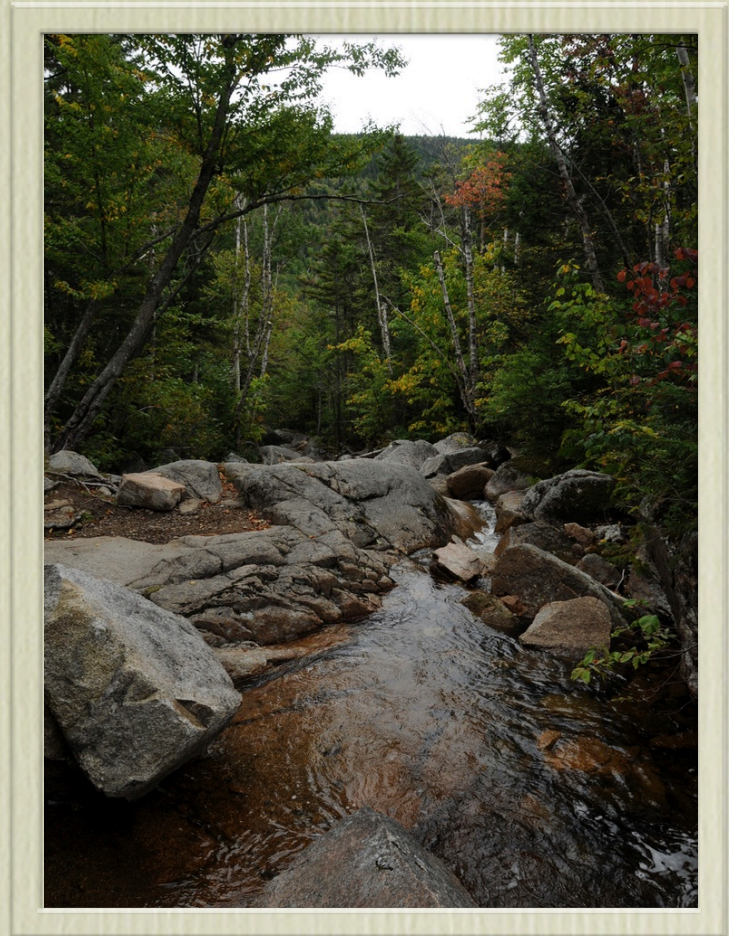
- Check for trail closings, reroutes, alternate routes
- Identify bail out options in case something goes wrong
- Leave detailed plans with someone who can start emergency procedures if you get into trouble



Environmental Assessment

The backpacking trip starts before you leave

- Weather forecast
- Water availability
- Wildlife
- Sun protection
- Insects
- Navigation
- Remoteness
- Trail conditions



Choosing a Camp Site - Main Goals

- Pick a safe site
- Don't disturb the environment
- Anatomy of a camp site
- Handling water
- Dealing with human waste

Choosing a Camp Site - The Environment

- Research options ahead of time
- Existing campsites and shelters
- If you choose your own site, note that some trails prohibit stealth camping - know the rules



Choosing a Safe Camp Site

- Flat area & check for rocks
- No overhanging branches or dead trees
- Look for signs of running water
- Avoid running water that might flood
- Animal signs?
- Water source near by?
- Existing latrine?

Anatomy of a Camp Site

- Tent/shelter location
- Make yourself comfortable
- Locating backpack
- Cooking area and washing dishes
- Campfire
- Tarps (provides area from rain/sun)
- Keep animals away



Choosing a Camp Site - Water

- Purify all water
- Running water works best
- Be prepared for low water levels
- Personal hygiene



Choosing a Camp Site - Washing Dishes

- No soap is safe for the backcountry
- Illness from contaminated dishes is a major cause of illness in backcountry
- Cooking with little cleanup is best (Ziploc bag/pouch cooking)
- If you use dishes:
 - Pack out your scrapes
 - Dispose of grey water away from water sources

Choosing a Camp Site - Human Waste

- Many backcountry sites have been lost to bio-hazards
- Utilize outhouses where possible
- Someone has to clean them, so don't put anything in except human waste and toilet paper
- If there is no outhouse...dig, poop, stick
- How to “poop in the woods”
- No bowel movements = Bad



Keeping a Camp Critter Free

- Keep food/toiletries out of shelter
- Secure food/toiletries in bear box or in bag suspended in a tree
- Cook/eat away from shelter area



Equipment - Larger Items

- **Backpacks**

- There are different sizes (60L -85L) (Capacity & Fit)
- Be sure to get properly fitted

- **Shelter**

- Tent, tarp, hammock (lean-to available)
- Ground cloth
- **Sleeping bag/sleeping pad -option bag liner**
 - Temperature ratings

Equipment - Little Items

- Map & Compass
- Pocket knife
- Whistle
- Headlamp & spare batteries
- Matches/lighter/fire starter
- First-aid kit
- Extra ziploc bags
- Toilet paper/hand sanitizer
- Cat hole shovel-optional
- Cordage
- “Go kit” (more later)

Equipment - Other Items

- Hiking poles
- Pack rain cover
- Waterproof bags
- Sunscreens
- Sunglasses
- Eye protection (bushwack)
- Camera(optional)
- Insect repellent
- Chapstick
- Pencil/paper
- Bandana
- Dining fly/tarp
- Cellphone (airplane mode)
- Personal effects
 - License/ID, money, insurance card
 - Contact #'s, meds list, car keys

Go Kit

- Duct tape
- Sewing kit
- Spare batteries
- Space blanket
- Hand warmers (seasonal)
- Water purification tabs
- Small tube of superglue
- Zip ties

Food

- Consider calories, prep, fuel/water needs & taste
- Nutrition on the trail - breakfast, lunch & dinner
- Snacks - assortment of nuts, bars, dried fruit
- Simple and lightweight - pre-pack food to eliminate waste
- Get food that is nutritious, that you want to eat
- Approximately 2/2.5 lbs/per person/per day
- Carbs 60%, Fats 25% and Proteins 15%

More on Food

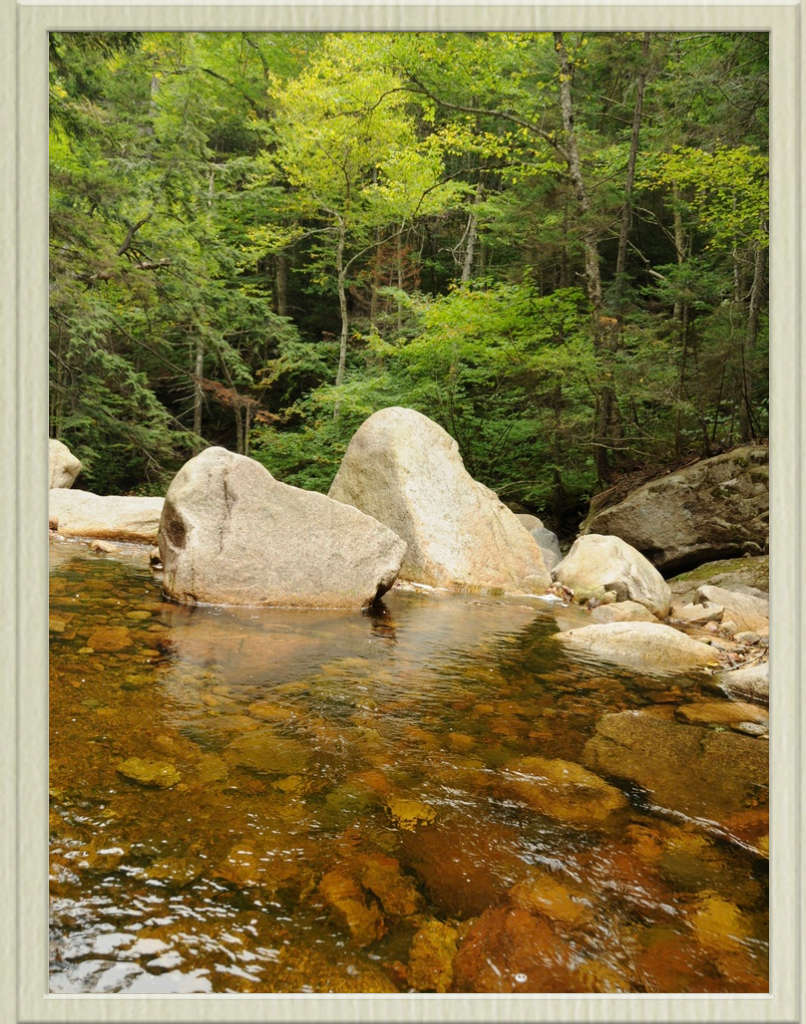
- Be aware on critters - bears/rodents
- Utilize a bear box if provided, if not, use a bear bag
- Bear bag
 - Minimum of 8' off ground and 6' from tree or branch - one or two rope system
 - Recommended bag to be located 100 yards from sleeping, cooking and washing areas vs reality at times
 - All food and “smellable” items go in bag at night
- Keep cooking, eating and cleaning 100 yards away from the sleeping area vs reality at times

Hydration

- Hydrate before you hike
- Avoid dehydration, hypothermia(cold), hyperthermia(heat) illness
 - Normal activity - 2+ liters per day
 - Hot temps - 3.5 liters per day
 - Heavy exercise - 6.5 per day
- Drink early and often
- Add electrolytes
- Hydration systems - Bottles or bladder systems

Making Water Safe

- Filters
(Giardia, Cryptosporidium)
- Boiling
- UV light (Steri-pen)
- Iodine & Chlorine Dioxide tablets
- Use municipal/potable water when you can



Cooking Equipment

- Stove
- Pot/pan/utensils
- Ziploc bags
- Individual or group gear - up to you



Fuel

- **White gas or alcohol stoves**
 - Warm weather 5 oz per person/per day
 - More in cold weather/high altitude
- **Canister stoves**
 - Start with fresh canister or have a backup
- **Esbit**
 - Fuel tablets - smell bad
 - One tab will boil 2 cups of water

Clothing for Backpacking

- Prepare for the worst weather-dressing in layers
 - Base layer - synthetic or wool
 - Insulating layer - synthetic or down
 - Outer layer - protection from wind,rain,snow,ice
- Boots - broken in, waterproof/breathable
 - Gaitors
- Hat and sunglasses



For a typical backpacking trip...

- Underwear - synthetic or wool
- Trekking pants (shorts optional)
- Short & long sleeve shirts sleeve - synthetic or wool
- Bug shirt -long sleeve (optional)
- Socks - synthetic or wool (layering)

For a typical backpacking trip (continued..)

- **When you stop:**
 - Insulating layer - fleece, wool or down
- **Weather:**
 - Rain jacket - vented pits, adjustable hood w/bill, breathable
 - Wind jacket - lightweight, other uses
 - Rain pants
- **When you sleep:**
 - Wear clothing to keep you comfortable

Personal Hygiene

- Hand sanitizer/bio soap
- Baby wipes
- Nail file/clippers (on your knife?)
- Dental care/floss
- Plastic mirror (for emergencies also)
- Camp towel
- Feminine hygiene considerations

First Aid and Emergencies

In spite of careful planning, bad things can happen in the backcountry.

- Be upfront about medical conditions before the hike
- Be prepared
- Most common injuries
 - Blisters
 - Ankle/knee sprains
 - Dehydration/hypothermia/exhaustion
 - Scrapes/blood

Emergency Scenarios

Common sense - if it needs to see a doctor, time to evacuate

- **Lightning**
- **Severe hypothermia/dehydration/heat exhaustion**
- **Allergic reactions**
- **Burns larger than a quarter**
- **Severe poison ivy**
- **Infection from injuries**
- **Head injury**
- **Bad fall/broken bones**

First Aid Kit

- Band-aid
- Moleskin
- Adhesive
- Gauze
- SOAP note
- Paper/pencil
- Ace bandage
- Neosporin
- Alcohol wipes
- Tweezers
- Iodine
- Nitrile gloves
- SAM splint(optional)
- Knife/scissors
- Ziploc bags
- Safety pin

First Aid Training

- Consider becoming Wilderness First Aid certified
 - 2 Day course (16 Hours)
 - Certification good for 2 years
 - Makes you better prepared to handle medical issues whether in the backcountry or at home/work



**Get out there, do some
backpacking and have fun!**