



## LEAVE NO TRACE AND GIRL SCOUTING

Leave No Trace is an ethic that promotes minimum impact enjoyment and recreational use of the land. Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) works collaboratively with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics at the national and local levels through the Elliott Wildlife Values Project's *Linking Girls to the Land* partnership.

GSUSA fully supports Leave No Trace values and ethics, which teach stewardship, minimal impact camping, and responsible recreational use of the land. GSUSA also encourages Girl Scout councils to become familiar with the Leave No Trace principles, trainings, and educational materials and to integrate them into their outdoor program. Councils can work with federal natural resource agency partners of *Linking Girls to the Land* to provide staff to assist with Leave No Trace trainings. For more information on *Linking Girls to the Land*, visit [www.epa.gov/linkinggirls](http://www.epa.gov/linkinggirls) or contact Manager, Linking Girls to the Land, GSUSA, 1-800-223-0624 or [linkinggirls@girlscouts.org](mailto:linkinggirls@girlscouts.org).

**Girl Scouts and the Leave No Trace Ethic.** As part of the Girl Scout Law, Girl Scouts have been taught since 1912 to “use resources wisely” and to leave a place better than they found it. But they don't have to be in the back country to practice this. The Leave No Trace ethic is just as relevant to the backyard, the local park and the Girl Scout camp. Leave No Trace builds awareness, appreciation, and respect for the outdoors. It builds girls' courage, confidence, and character, so that they can plan and be prepared for the situations they encounter in the outdoors, enjoy their recreation experiences, and have a minimal impact on the Earth. When Girl Scouts practice Leave No Trace skills and ethics, they literally make the world a better place. Leave No Trace concepts are strongly woven into the Girl Scout handbooks and resources, earned age-level awards, and training objectives.

The seven **Leave No Trace Principles** are rooted in both science and common sense:

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors

Leave No Trace has adaptations for different regions, ecosystems, and activities: North America, Northeast Mountains, Southeast, Pacific Northwest, Sierra Nevada, Alaska Wildlands, Desserts and Canyons, Western River Corridors, Tropical Rainforest, Lakes Region, Rocky Mountain, Mountain Biking, Rock Climbing, Sea Kayaking, Horse Use, Fishing and Caving.

## Trainings, Opportunities and Materials Available

- **Awareness Workshops**, for adults and children, facilitated by a Leave No Trace Master Educator or Trainer, may vary in length from one hour to one day. Many pre-designed programs and activities are available from the Center. Awareness Workshops and discussions are appropriate program for outdoor days, camporees, leader weekends, and camp. Certificates are available for completion of the event.
- **Trainer Course** is a 16 hour experiential course (comparable to Girl Scouts Train the Trainer) for older girls and adults. Although it is outdoors, it does not necessarily include a back country trip. Trainers and at least one Master Educator facilitate this course. Cost varies depending on the venue but usually runs about \$50, and each Master Educator does her own scheduling. Some courses are listed on the Leave No Trace Web site, [www.LNT.org/training/trainercourses/index.html](http://www.LNT.org/training/trainercourses/index.html). A certificate and pin are usually awarded to those completing the course. Participants who complete this course are able to facilitate other Trainer and Awareness Courses.
- **Master Educator Course** is a 5-day comprehensive course for adults that provides an overview of Leave No Trace techniques through practical application in a field setting. The first day is spent in a classroom, introducing the course, reviewing gear, and packing. The remaining four days are spent on a short hiking, sea kayaking, horse packing, rafting, or canoeing trip learning and practicing the principles of Leave No Trace. A certificate and sometimes a pin are presented to those finishing the course.

Tuition is \$500-\$830. **Partial scholarships** are available through the Center. Applicants must be enrolled in an approved Leave No Trace Master Educator course before applying for a scholarship. Scholarship recipients are expected to conduct Leave No Trace Trainer Courses and Awareness Workshops regularly to Girl Scouts and others, and to report on such courses to the Center. For more information, visit [www.LNT.org/training/mastercourses/index.html#tuition](http://www.LNT.org/training/mastercourses/index.html#tuition).

- **Subaru Traveling Trainers** provide **free** Leave No Trace trainings ranging from one hour workshops to large scale events. Trainings can be tailored to Girl Scout staff, leaders, or a girl audience and should be scheduled 6 to 8 months in advance. *Note: There is a fee for the Trainer Course.*
- **State and National Park and Land Management** personnel often present Leave No Trace mini-workshops and trailhead discussions in their areas. Contact the ranger station for more information.
- **Educational Materials** are available for Girl Scout staff, volunteers and older Girl Scouts to help teach Leave No Trace principles in the Girl Scout outdoor training curriculum.

- The **PEAK (Promoting Environmental Awareness in Kids)** program for children 5 to 12 years old includes activities for leaders and program aids to share Leave No Trace with younger girls. A PEAK activity is also an excellent experiential lesson for outdoor leader training. Not only do leaders learn about Leave No Trace, they go home with a ready made activity. For more information on obtaining a PEAK pack, visit [www.LNT.org/programs/peak/index.html](http://www.LNT.org/programs/peak/index.html). Federal and state natural resource agencies often have PEAK packs available for loan.
- Teaching resources and activities may be downloaded **free** from the Center's Web site. A how-to guide for running *Awareness Workshops* and the *Awareness Workshop Guidelines* can be found at [www.LNT.org/training/resources/index.html](http://www.LNT.org/training/resources/index.html).
- Resources available for purchase include videos, *Skills and Ethics* Booklets, hangtags, pins, patches and stickers, a cookbook of activities, and brochures. Visit [www.store.LNT.org/Merchant2/merchant.mvc](http://www.store.LNT.org/Merchant2/merchant.mvc).
- **Tools for Teaching Grants** are available for those in need of Leave No Trace materials, training, and information that will be used to serve girls from underserved and diverse backgrounds. To apply visit [www.LNT.org/programs/grants/index.html](http://www.LNT.org/programs/grants/index.html).

**Many Girl Scout Councils (GSC) include major Leave No Trace activities in their outdoor program. For example,**

- Spanish Trails GSC started giving Trainer Courses in 1998.
- In 2003, Tierra del Oro's Wider Op trained all participants as Trainers.
- Fair Winds GSC and San Fernando Valley GSC train most of their camp staff as Trainers.
- San Geronio GSC has held Trainer Courses taught by older girls for older girls.

**More Information**

- For general information, Master Educators Scholarships, or to schedule the Subaru Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers contact the Outreach Manager at the Center for Outdoor Ethics, 1-800-332-8222, or visit [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org).
- For information on how to incorporate Leave No Trace into your Girl Scout council program and training, contact Liz Williams, Girl Scouts Heart of Central California, 916-669-3231 or email [liz.williams@girlscoutshcc.org](mailto:liz.williams@girlscoutshcc.org).
- To join the Girl Scout Leave No Trace Task Force, contact Marj Eby Chair, Girl Scouts of Southeastern Pennsylvania, 215-643-3924, or email [marjeb@gmail.com](mailto:marjeb@gmail.com).
- To network with other Girl Scouts interested in Leave No Trace, join the Yahoo Group [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/girl\\_scout\\_leave\\_no\\_trace\\_task\\_force](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/girl_scout_leave_no_trace_task_force) or email [girl\\_scout\\_leave\\_no\\_trace\\_task\\_force@yahoo.com](mailto:girl_scout_leave_no_trace_task_force@yahoo.com).