

# Seven Principles of Leave No Trace\*

## **Plan Ahead and Prepare**

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use
- Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups
- Repackage food to minimize waste
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

## **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces**

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary
- In popular areas:
  - Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites
  - Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy
  - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent
  - In pristine areas:
    - Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails
    - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

## **Dispose of Waste Properly**

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater

## **Leave What You Find**

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

## **Minimize Campfire Impacts**

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the environment. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes

## **Respect Wildlife**

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely
- Control pets at all times, or leave them at home
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter

## **Be Considerate of Other Visitors**

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises

\*Source: <https://lnt.org/learn/7-principles>