

Troop 212, Tahquitz Backpack Trip, January 27-29, 2017

Dear Scouts and Scouters,

PLAN A

Our January 27-29 backpacking adventure involves exploring Camp Tahquitz in snow. This will be an off-trail adventure of undetermined length where we will experience snow travel, snow camping and special navigation in winter conditions. We plan to snowshoe and/or cross-country ski as our mode of locomotion.

On Friday evening, January 27th, we'll meet at 7:00 pm at the Church parking lot and drive to Camp Tahquitz. We will locate a suitable campsite for the first night someplace close to the vehicles, but away from the Family Cabins and the K-Lodge...we are on our own and these facilities are not part of our program. We will be allowed to use the Camps bathroom facilities Friday night and Saturday morning, but there are no such facilities available elsewhere in the camp. It is possible we may be able to take advantage of the piped in water for our breakfast, but do not count on that too much. Instead plan on full snow melting techniques the whole weekend for drinking water, and if we find potable water Saturday for breakfast, we will consider ourselves lucky. After breakfast Saturday morning, we will break camp and hike to a remote, back woods destination chosen by the SPL, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, and the other backpackers. Once back woods camp has been reached, we will set up for cold weather camping in snow conditions, as well as low impact camping techniques. Scouts will be organized in teams of three participants per team, with each team being assigned a double walled winter tent. Snow caves or igloo construction may be considered, but will be finalized only when we are able to review the conditions of safety when we actually arrive at the remote campsite. The evening will feature a campfire, provided conditions allow and firewood is secured by the backpackers. Each patrol should plan to bring sufficient rope and tools to make the campfire.

Sunday morning we will eat breakfast, break camp, making sure we practice our best Low Impact Camping Skills, (LICS; pronounced the same as licks) and hike back to the parking area. We will stop for lunch on the drive home. **Scouts are to bring money for lunch and be in Class B uniform.** Troop gear should be cleaned and dried at home, to be returned on Monday during the troop meeting.

Possible PLAN B:

In the event that there is not sufficient snow for this adventure at Tahquitz, we will backpack Mt. San Jacinto via the tram as the alternative. The meeting time for this Plan B trip will be meet at 5:30 AM Saturday, Jan 28th, with plans to depart at 6:00am. (Same Sunday return time). The tram is additional cost of \$25.95/person over 12 years old, \$16.95/person ages 3-12. (See Tram website at www.pstramway.com/.) The cost to the troop will remain the same. So far, based on the current weather, **presume that the hike will proceed as Plan A described above.** Any decision to employ Plan B would be announced Friday evening in the Church parking lot.

Important Days and Costs:

\$35 : \$25 covers 1 trail dinner, 2 trail breakfasts, campsite fees, + \$10 for gas. **Please bring \$35 cash or check (drivers bring \$35 as well, See Process Change 2 Announcement below) to the troop meeting on Monday, January 23rd, with the standard permission slip,** which can be found on the website. Troop packs will be checked out at this meeting. This is the deadline for this collection. No collections will be allowed after this Jan 23rd meeting.

Thursday, January 26th at 7:00 PM – our standard mandatory final “bag check” will be held at the church at 7pm, room location to be determined, where we will also distribute the backpacking food, stoves, fuel, some snow shoes, and tents, enabling hikers to finish loading their packs for final weigh-in.

Friday, January 27th at 7:00 PM – Church parking lot. Please arrive promptly before departure for a quick visual pack inspection and vehicle loading.

Sunday, January 31st, at approximately 4:00 PM, back at Church Parking Lot. Please do not depart for home until all troop gear has been accounted for and your SPL has dismissed you.

Process Change Announcements:

Process Change 1 ; Effective immediately, any trip attendee additions will not be accepted after the troop meeting deadline of 8:30 PM, Mondays. There will be no additions or refunds processed between that Monday evenings meeting end and Friday's departure. **Reasoning:** The Mondays that are scheduled for trip money collection and permission slip collection are noted in the published Program Calendar months in advance of each trip, as well as automatic e-mail reminders issued several days in advance of each trip. We need final money, and permission slips by the scheduled Monday deadline to serve as a "serious commitment to attend" the trip in order for the Trip Leaders to have the remaining days before departure day to finalize program arrangements such as calculate the quantity of drivers required, type of vehicle to expect for equipment hauling arrangements, determine seatbelt safety arrangements, finalize menu planning, and commit our final campsite space arrangements. We announce the trip agenda and goals for each trip leading up the each trip during the monthly parents meetings, and the weekly boys meetings, so as to ensure enough time and content information for each scout and adult the ability to make an informed attendance decision by the deadline date.

Process Change 2: Effective immediately, all scouts and adults will submit the same payments amounts on the scheduled Monday collections night. Adults that actually provide their cars for the trip will get rebated their gas allowance for providing their car in the same check they receive for their share of the gas pool money. For example; this trip everyone, adults and scouts, pays \$35 on Monday. The adults that actually provide a car for the trip receive their \$10 back at the same time as they receive their share of the gas pool money.

Equipment:

As a minimum, the following items should be packed in a backpack (NO black duffel bags):

<ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Appropriate clothing (Day 30-40's/Night-teens☐ Brim Hat and warm hat for nighttime☐ Pocket Knife☐ Flashlight (small is best)☐ Sunscreen and Chapstick☐ First Aid Kit☐ Compass☐ Hiking boots, extra socks☐ Boot spikes/crampons☐ Trek/ski poles w/basket	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Ground Cloth☐ Poncho/Rain Gear☐ Small baggy of Handy-wipes, Toothbrush & paste☐ Toilet paper & trowel☐ water bottle ("camelbak" not recommended)☐ Mess Kit (utensils, bowl, mug, etc)☐ Whistle☐ Trail Map (passed out at camp)☐ Warm gloves/Mittens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Matches or Flint☐ Pencils, Pens, Notebook☐ Rope – 10 Feet☐ Warm Sleeping Bag and Pad☐ 2 Small towels☐ Sunglasses/Ski goggles☐ Money for Sunday lunch☐ Favorite Trail Snacks☐ Saturday Lunch
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Important Equipment Notes:

1) Hiking conditions are expected in 12-30 inches of snow. **Two pieces of equipment are highly recommended:** 1) snow shoes. The troop has six pair of snowshoes to loan. REI, Tustin location, rents shoes for a reasonable cost. 2) ski or trek pole with a basket on the end (2 poles are best). Please note: a standard hiking staff (such as we often distribute at the trailhead) will be insufficient as the end is not pointy and has no snow basket on the end. A pole can be purchased at a reasonable cost (old ski poles can often be found at thrift stores).

1a) **Necessary if we hike San Jacinto:** Ice spikes. The troop has 12 pairs available to loan.

2) January temperatures range from the teens at night, to the low 40's during the day. The temperature last week was 15°.

3) Each backpacker is responsible for lunches and snacks. Lunches are Saturday, and the wise hiker will be prepared for Sunday, as well. The troop plans to have lunch on the way home. However, when backpacking, one cannot always get out at a scheduled time, especially in snow conditions. Remember that snow backpacking burns many more calories than normal. Be prepared with extra food rations.

4) Please keep in mind that a full backpack should be no more than one-fourth the weight of the scout carrying it. Remember to plan for your share of food and troop gear distributed on Thursday.

5) Proper uniform for this event will be Class B level, due to the nature of the weather conditions we will be encountering Friday night as soon as we leave the comfort of the cars.

6) For more useful details about winter camping that will make attending this trip easier, please refer to our troop 212 website, click on the "resource " tab, and then click on "tips".

Important Driver Notes:

We plan to park immediately once we reach Camp Tahquitz near the Family Cabins on the north side of HWY 38. We will not be traveling up the road to the typical camping area. We must be prepared for snow and icy conditions.

1) California State Law requires that all vehicles traveling into the mountains between Nov. 1 and April 1 carry tire chains, even if no snow is on the road. This includes 4WD vehicles. If conditions turn out as predicted, we will need to "chain-up" so be prepared by having chains in your vehicle. If you do not own chains, check with other T212 parents who may be willing to loan a set to you (must fit your tires).

2) Please ensure that your vehicle's antifreeze is sufficient to park your car in overnight temperatures that may dip into the low teens. If you are uncertain, a simple gauge is available. See Chuck, if interested.

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