

Northwaters Confirmation Packet

Welcome, and thank you for being a part of the Northwaters and Langskib (NWL) community. We are thrilled your child will be joining us this summer. Being entrusted with your child is not a responsibility we take lightly. We consider ourselves partners in the journey through adolescence. When young people canoe trip together, they have the time and freedom to connect with the land, the water, each other- and ultimately, themselves. Each of the expressed policies in this packet help us to create safe, empowering, FUN experiences for each of our participants in the context of a true backcountry adventure. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Warmly,

Jodi and CG

COMMUNICATION

Participants spend the first and last two days/nights of program on our remote, rustic, island basecamps. The rest of their time at NWL is spent on trail in smaller tripping sections. Our directors, administrators, and support staff remain at basecamp, and are generally available by email. We try very hard to limit phone time to urgent communications, as our phone line is our primary link with staff in the field and emergency services.

Email Updates

About half-way through your child's experience we will send one thoughtful and "official" email update to families. We will include news about participants' basecamp stay, a description of their route, which trip leaders they are traveling with, and a link to any photos we may have captured at basecamp. Beyond this update, and the occasional basecamp news on our Facebook page, we operate on the adage, "no news is good news".

Contacting Us

September 1st through June 15th:

Northwaters / Langskib

P.O. Box 205

Westport, NY 12993 USA

Phone: 518-962-4869 Fax: 518-962-8768

Email: canoe@northwaters.com

June 15th through September 1st

Northwaters / Langskib

P.O. Box 358

Temagami, ON POH 2HO Canada

Phone: 705-237-8227 Fax: 705-237-8663

Email: canoe@northwaters.com

Contacting Participants

We suggest mailing letters early so they arrive in time for participants to receive when they return to basecamp at the end of session (no letters are delivered while participants are on trail). Letters from outside of Canada typically take at least 14 days to arrive. Stamps can be purchased at basecamp if a participant would like to write a letter. Our basecamps are located on islands not serviced by Canada Post or any courier/shipping company. It is often expensive, difficult, and time consuming to get a package to or from either island. Packages are delayed at customs or delivered to random locations on the mainland for us to retrieve. Often times, participants don't receive packages at all, or they arrive after the participants have gone home. We recommend you send letters in lieu of packages and save special treats for a welcome home celebration. We strongly advise against sending anything perishable or of value. Please Note: If a participant arrives without an important piece of personal gear, we will provide a loaner.

PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

One of the gifts of canoe tripping is that it requires very little specialized equipment. Below are some things to consider as you prepare your child for their adventure.

Trip leaders work with participants to pack their trail bags. Excess items and valuables are secured at basecamp, and returned the last day of the program. Our staff created this short and helpful [How to Pack for a Canoe Trip](#) video, which pairs perfectly with our Gear List (attached). Below are some additional things to consider when preparing for NWL.

Nut-Free

Please note that for the safety of everyone, NWL is a peanut and tree-nut free program and facility. **Do not send, or allow your child to bring, anything containing nuts or tree nuts.**

Snacks and Dietary Concerns

Living away from home and travelling in the back country is challenging, and adjusting to the difference in food takes time and intention. Every year we revisit our trip menu to be sure it provides calorie-rich, healthy, substantial food for sections as they travel. We can accommodate most dietary restrictions and pack out food for each section accordingly. Three hearty meals are provided each day in addition to two snacks throughout the morning and afternoon on trail. Because we travel in the back country, it is imperative that participants NOT store personal food in their Duluth bags or tents. For safety, nutrition, and fairness sake, we **strongly discourage participants from bringing supplemental food on trail**. If you feel your child needs more than our menu can provide, please send enough nut-free, protein-rich, packable, non-perishable food items to share with the full section.

Electronics

We know the journey to basecamp can be very long and devices can help make the time pass more enjoyably. Please be aware, however, that **all electronics, including cell phones**, will be collected along with all other valuables for safekeeping upon arrival at basecamp, and returned at departure. There is no cell service on the island or on trail.

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

The use of alcohol or drugs (including cigarettes, e-cigs, vapes, vape pens, JUULs, and marijuana) is absolutely not permitted at NWL. Possession of illegal drugs (and underage possession of legal drugs) in Canada is punishable by law and crossing the Canadian border with illegal drugs is a serious criminal offense. If participants are found in possession of illegal drugs they will be removed from our program at the parents/guardians expense and tuition will not be refunded.

The Giveaway (Northern Lights and Northwaters)

We ask that participants bring something that has been important or meaningful in their life that they are ready to pass on—it need not have any monetary value. It might be a poem or song that holds special meaning, a book that had impact, a drawing or poster, something they have created, or an object that holds a special memory. These are just suggestions—we have found young people to be very creative in this ceremony. We encourage each participant to take some time to think about the possibilities and any support of this would be most appreciated. We have borrowed this custom from the Native peoples. Many past participants have said that the Giveaway was a highlight for them. Two things that we have come to learn: the more difficult it is to give up, the more it is an actual Giveaway, and giving away makes room for new growth. This last learning seems particularly appropriate for young people entering adolescence.

The Trade (optional)

A longstanding tradition at Langskib, The Trade is something that is occasionally requested at the end of a Northwaters program as well. The Trade we conduct is a trading experience reflective of the early first nation and trapper rendezvous. Even though they did not share a common language, they were able to communicate with each other and make trades that were of benefit for both parties. There is no money exchanged during the trading session and only sign language is used. In the past we have found many of our participants to be most creative in this activity. If your child would like to bring an item or items to trade we suggest things with limited monetary value; for example, old pocket knives, funky hats, hand crafted items, comics or trinkets. We have a staff member act as a trade arbiter who makes sure that trades are fair and fun.

TUITION

Tuition balances are due May 15th or as stated on your invoice. Tuition covers all activities from arrival at basecamp until departure on the last day of the session with the exception of optional pre and post camp bus fare and optional spending money (travel snacks and/or items from the camp store such as t-shirts, hoodies, maps, water bottles & stickers), which can be purchased at the end of session BBQ.

Trip/Travel Insurance

Parents are financially responsible for expenses not covered by either NWL's or your personal insurance. Check with your insurance provider about the extent to which your child is covered during their time with NWL. Purchasing appropriate trip/travel insurance can provide coverage for costs incurred in the unlikely event of illness or injury including evacuation and associated travel expenses. **We strongly recommend** that you purchase travel insurance that specifically covers summer camp/wilderness adventures. Allianz, Trav Mark, Travel Guard International, and InsureMyTrip.com are a few reputable providers.

Refund Policy

If for any reason an application is withdrawn 60 or more days prior to the session start date, deposit and tuition will be refunded minus a \$50 processing fee. Cancellations made within 60 days of the program start date forfeit 50% of the program tuition, including deposit. Balances are due by May 15th. NWL is not obligated to refund the tuition of any participants who withdraw or are dismissed the day before, the day of, or any time after the first day session begins.

NWL Check-off List for you To Do

- Sign and return your Code of Conduct Agreement (parent and participant)
- Make certain you have personal identification and passport with travel letter (if non-Canadian resident)
- Make travel arrangements and submit Travel Form in Parent Portal (between January 15th & May 15th)
- Submit Health Form in Parent Portal (between January 15th May 15th)
- Pay tuition, tax, and travel balance by May 15th or as stated on invoice
- Pack gear (refer to attached Gear List and our [How to Pack for a Canoe Trip](#) video)

Northwaters and Langskib Wilderness Canoe Programs Gear List

NWL provides all of the group camping and canoeing equipment. Individuals are responsible for bringing their personal gear. There is no need to buy expensive gear; you may have many of these items already or find them at a second-hand store.

Comfortable, durable clothes appropriate for backcountry travel in the changeable Temagami weather will make all the difference in your experience on trail. Conditions range from cold and wet, to hot and sunny, sometimes in the same day. Packable layers are key, as are synthetic materials that will keep you warm even when wet. Clothing will see hard use and will be carried by you inside your dry bag, inside your Duluth, inside your canoe and on portages. Size, quantity and versatility of items should be considered.

Generally speaking, participants pack one set of clothes/shoes to wear during the day for portaging, paddling and hiking and a different set of clothes/shoes for the evenings for setting up camp, cooking and sleeping. Check out our [How to Pack for a Canoe Trip](#) video here.

Please label each item with your first and last name. NWL cannot be responsible for items damaged, lost, or left behind.

- Duffle Bag** Everything you bring to program should fit in this bag. Due to the rugged nature of our basecamps, the duffle is the best way to transport your gear from home to camp. We will provide a special canoe pack (Duluth) for you to take on trail. Your duffle and any valuable or extra items will stay securely behind at basecamp.

Personal Camping Gear

- River Bag/Dry Bag** 55-liter waterproof bag holds your trail clothing and personal gear within the Duluth.
- Day Pack and/or Dry Bag** Holds personal items you need to access throughout the day (sunscreen, water bottle, rain gear, warm layer, bug spray etc.). A small 15-20 liter dry bag can work on its own, or act as a day pack liner (to keep items within waterproof). Day pack should be durable, compact, and no larger than a 20-30 liter capacity.
- Sleeping Bag** Compact mummy-type bag rated for 5°C or 40°F with maximum packed size of 50x25cm. Here's a nice [article on the types of sleeping bags](#) suitable for backcountry camping.
- Sleeping Pad** Compact closed-cell foam or self-inflating Therma-Rest type, NOT inflatable air mattress or cushion. Here's a good [article on the types of sleeping pads](#) suitable for backcountry camping.
- 1-liter Water Bottle** Durable aluminum, stainless steel or heavy duty plastic. Wide mouth Nalgene ideal.
- Sunglasses** UV rated. Attachment cord recommended.
- Headlamp or Flashlight** With extra batteries.
- Mess Kit** Fork, spoon and cup. Insulated cup is nice, but not necessary.
- Knife** For camp chores/crafts and cooking. Folding or sheath, simple or multi-tool, 2-3" blade ideal.

Clothing

- Underwear** Enough for the duration of your stay, at your discretion.
- Two long underwear tops** Long sleeve wool, synthetic fiber or polyester blend. Quick dry, not cotton.
- One pair of long underwear bottoms** Wool, synthetic or polyester blend. Quick dry, not cotton.
- One pair of fleece pants** Or other warm, loose fitting, light weight, durable, quick-drying material.
- One pair of long quick-dry pants** Nylon "hiking pants" or synthetic "track pants" are perfect.

- Four pair of warm wool socks** Or material designed to insulate like wool.
- Two pair of shorts** Lightweight and durable.
- Two t-shirts** Synthetic fiber or poly-blend, limit cotton.
- One swimsuit** 2-piece preferable.

Outerwear

- One sun hat** Any lightweight hat with brim.
- One warm hat/toque** Wool or fleece preferred.
- Two fleece jackets or pullovers** One for daytime “wet fleece” and one for nighttime “dry fleece”.
- One rain jacket** Coated/rubberized nylon is fine. Expensive/breathable jackets are nice, not necessary.
- One set of rain pants** Super helpful in the rain and as an insulating layer.
- One pair of daytime ‘Wet Shoes’** Durable, supportive, FULLY ENCLOSED sneakers or light hikers are best. NO BOOTIES OR SANDALS. Worn all day paddling, portaging and hiking.
- One pair of nighttime ‘Dry Shoes’** To change into in the evening after washing and drying your feet. Should also be lightweight, durable and fully enclosed. Sneakers are perfect. No leather please.

Toiletries

- Sunblock** Waterproof 30-SPF lotion recommended.
- Bug repellent** Non-aerosol. The most effective insect repellents contain some percentage of DEET.
- Toothbrush/toothpaste** Environmentally friendly, travel size.
- Biodegradable liquid soap** Dr Bronners or CampSuds type brand.

Miscellaneous*

- 1-2 comfortable travel/basecamp outfits** Cotton, jeans, hoodies, sweatshirt/pants are fine. These are clothes you can wear in the front country and will stay behind, clean and dry, at basecamp.
- Towel** Primarily for swimming at basecamp. If taking on trail, bring small chamois-type fabric.
- Giveaway** Northwaters/Northern Lights or **Trade Item** Excalibur/Langskib (see Confirmation Packet)
- Camera** Optional. Disposable and/or waterproof recommended- NOT your phone.
- Journal** Optional. Book or other small packable hobby/craft item.
- Personal Identification or travel documents as needed** Will be stored securely at basecamp.
- Fishing rod/tackle** Optional for personal use during down time, rod should be stored in a tube.
- Money** Optional \$25-50 for camp store if your parents aren’t coming to the BBQ.

*If there are other small personal items that would help make your trail experience better, you may bring them and discuss with your trip leaders while packing (nail clippers, bug net, foot powder, work gloves...)

Leave at home- any of the follow items brought to basecamp will be collected

- NUT PRODUCTS** For the safety of all, NWL is a nut safe program and facility.
- SNACKS/CANDY** Personal food is not safe, we provide ample calories (see Confirmation for details)
- PHONE or other electronics** Will be safely stored with other valuables at basecamp.