

Wilderness Volunteers
BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE AREA WILDERNESS
SERVICE TRIP EQUIPMENT LIST

Part I: Most Important Items

Personal gear bags

Duluth packs, internal frame backpacks or drybags are acceptable. You can borrow a Duluth pack from the Forest Service if you need one. Whatever you use, here are some basic rules:

1. All your gear must fit into one or two packs. Several small daypacks can't be portaged efficiently.
2. Your waterproofing system must be bombproof. If you use an internal frame backpack or a Duluth pack, you must line it with a three to six mil plastic bag that can be closed securely. (I'll have a supply of these liner bags if you need one.) A stuff sack inside the plastic liner protects it from sharp edges and points in your personal gear.
3. Maximum weight for personal gear is 30 pounds. (We can weigh your pack at the trailhead if you don't have a scale at home.)

Daypack

You'll need to carry your rain gear, work shoes, work gloves, lunch and water when we go to work each day.

Raingear

Rain pants and a hooded rain jacket are recommended. Ponchos don't work well for paddling or working. Vinyl is not sufficiently durable. Coated nylon is relatively inexpensive and durable. Breathable fabrics are more comfortable (and more expensive), but are not necessary.

Footwear

You'll need canoe shoes, which will stay wet all week, as well as boots for wear while working on the trails and campsites. Optional third pair of shoes: lightweight camp shoes or sandals for dry comfort and low impact in camp.

Canoe shoes must be substantial enough for portaging and provide protection from rocks and roots, as well as traction on slippery surfaces. Recommended: old hiking boots or sneakers with good tread.

Shelter

Tent with rainfly and waterproof liner (ground cloth optional).
Sleeping pad and sleeping bag.

Water bottles

Two or more one-quart bottles are a minimum. Bottles with a wide mouth are much easier to fill.

Water treatment

Water used in the preparation of group meals will be either boiled or treated with iodine. For your personal drinking water, bring iodine treatment or a filter that is fine enough to remove giardia cysts.

Work gloves

You should be able to grip your tool tightly when your gloves and your tool are wet. Bring two pairs so you can start each day with dry gloves.

Hardhat

In the BWCAW, the USFS provides hard hats when necessary, but if you have your own, you may want to bring it to wear while working.

"Croakie"

Bring a tether to make sure your sunglasses or prescription glasses don't fall into the lake.

Clothing

Long-sleeved shirt and long pants, shorts, t-shirts or short-sleeved shirts, swimsuit, socks (3 pr), underwear (3 pr), long underwear tops and bottoms, fleece jacket, knit cap, warm gloves

Small stuff

Flashlight, pocket knife, toiletries (biodegradable), towel, lip balm, bandanas

Hat with a brim

For sun protection. Your hat should have a chin strap or it will blow into the lake.

Eating utensils

A quart-sized Rubbermaid-like container (with a lid) makes a great bowl, and you can use it to pack your lunch each day (cutting down on the amount of plastic bags needed). A spoon is the only utensil necessary. Bring a cup/insulated mug for hot drinks.

Rx medications you take on a regular basis

Bring an extra day's dosage just in case.

Contact lens cleaner

Bring enough for an extra day just in case.

Insect repellent

Look for a repellent called Bite Blocker that contains no DEET. If you prefer to use a repellent

containing DEET, look for one with no more than 35% DEET. (See also headnet recommendation in Part II.)

___ Sunscreen

For maximum UVA and UVB protection look for a product rated SPF 15 or higher and containing the active ingredient Parsol 1789.

___ Toilet paper

Some campers prefer leaves. If you don't, bring one roll of biodegradable t.p. (approved for septic tanks) in a watertight bag. (All BWCAW campsites have a throne, but t.p. is not supplied.)

___ Deodorant

OK, so we'll be in the wilderness. We still have to work (and eat) together!

___ Baby wipes

A few in a zip-lock bag are handy for personal hygiene on those days when it's too cold to swim after work. Baby wipes are larger and stronger than the wet-naps that you get in the restaurant with your fried chicken.

___ Lunch container (important!)

A 1-quart Rubbermaid type container with lid will keep your sandwich and chips from being crushed in your pack.

Part II: Optional Items

___ Head net

If you want to avoid putting insect repellent chemicals on your body or clothing, you can obtain sufficient protection from biting insects by wearing long pants, long sleeves, a hat and a head net.

___ Treats

We'll provide all the food, including snacks. If you must bring your favorite treats, please keep them under one pound. Personal food must be bear bagged with the group food overnight and whenever we leave camp. Bear bags will be very heavy if there is too much personal food. **Cans and bottles are not permitted in BWCAW.**

___ Topo map

I'll have one in the trip library for reference. About a month before our trip, I'll send you a copy of a map showing our work area and our meeting place. Local outfitters sell maps showing canoe routes, portage trails and campsites.

___ Swim goggles

The lakes are very clear, but there isn't much to see on the lake bottom. (There's only one shipwreck, and it's not near our travel area)

___ Sunglasses

Polarized glasses will help you see through the glare on the water's surface.

___ Fishing gear

There are several places in town where you can buy a Minnesota fishing license and learn about local fishing regulations.

___ Reading material

Field guides are always useful. Maybe you would like to share a dramatic reading around the campfire one night.

___ Pen and paper

Some people enjoy keeping a journal.

___ Camera and film

If you bring a camera and film, also bring a waterproof container to keep them in.

___ Binoculars

Same advice as for camera and film.

___ Sun shower

For warm, sunny days, it will provide enough warm water for one shower. The sun shower is rather heavy, but if a warm shower is important, you'll find other things to leave out.

Part III: Canoe Equipment

(Necessary if you are bringing your own canoe)

___ Canoe

If your canoe is 16 to 18 feet long and has a comfortable portage yoke, you'll be O.K. If you don't have a canoe, you'll be able to use one of the USFS aluminum canoes. If you're concerned about the weight of a USFS canoe (about 70 pounds), you may choose to rent a lightweight Kevlar canoe (42 pounds) from one of the local outfitters (not included in trip price). I'll coordinate the number of USFS canoes we'll be using, so please tell me if you plan to bring your own canoe or a rental canoe.

___ Life jacket

Your PFD must be Coast Guard approved and must be comfortable. (Yes, we wear them.) If you plan to use a USFS canoe, PFDs will be included.

___ Paddles

Bring three per canoe if you're bringing your own canoe. Otherwise, the USFS canoes will include paddles.

___ Seat pads

Optional. They're great for sitting around camp, but they are not life preservers.

___ Painters

15-foot lines attached to each end of the canoe. These may not be provided with the USFS canoes, but they're very useful for tying up to roots and branches along shore.

___ Straps

Needed for securing your gear and (especially) the group gear to the canoe. If you tip over, your (our) cargo won't end up on the bottom of the lake if it's secured. Each person should bring two straps (minimum 36 inches) with buckles, or other secure fastener. Short lengths of rope work well too, but take a little longer to secure. (Bungee cords are NOT a good alternative.)

___ Big sponge

For bailing rain water. Attach to the canoe with a short line tied through a hole in the middle of the sponge.

Suggested First Aid Items

Band-Aids
Sterile gauze bandages
Medical tape, breathable fabric
First aide cream (Neosporin or Bacitracin)
Moleskin (for blisters)
Second skin type gel (for blisters & burn)
Tweezers
Scissors (for moleskin)
Anti-inflammatory medicine (Motrin, Aleve, etc)
Anti-acids tablets (Gaviscon, Tums, Roloids, etc)
Diarrhea medicine (Pepto-Bismol, Imodium, etc)
Ace bandage (for ankles, knees and wrist)
Hydrocortisone cream
Benadryl (for allergic rashes, itching)