

*Dear Arrowman,*

As the leadership of Order of the Arrow Trail Crew, we are stoked for you to experience the adventure of our program! To help you in preparation for your trip, we would like to convey some information specific to our program and supplemental to your Guidebook to Adventure:

### **Conditions at the Worksite**

Currently, the Order of the Arrow Trail Crew program is constructing a trail from Webster Parks to the summit of Cimarroncito Peak. This elevation of the worksite is approaching 10,000ft. Temperatures hover around 60-70 degrees during the day and can become much cooler during summer rainstorms. Nights regularly dip into the 40s, occasionally the 30s, with frequent wind at dusk.

We provide this context to help you properly plan your worksite clothing. We can safely say that our suggested long-sleeve work shirt is comfortable during the day and you will need all of the “UPPER BODY LAYERS” mentioned in your guidebook at night. It is imperative that you bring adequate layers while at the worksite. Extra layers can be sent back to basecamp with your work clothes before beginning your trek week.

### **Electronics**

Participants should be prepared to leave their cellular devices in base camp for the duration of their trek. Due to the rugged nature of the backcountry, there is a high likelihood of permanently damaging your device should you take it on your trek. Please consider the importance of your cell phone for your travel before bringing it onto the trail. Storage is provided in basecamp for all valuables. Accommodations can be made for special circumstances.

As noted in the [Philmont Guidebook to Adventure](#), radios, mp3 players, and video game devices are **prohibited** in the Philmont backcountry. The use of a cell phone as a form of entertainment **will not be permitted** at any time in the backcountry. Please note there are no locations for charging any electronic device while in the backcountry.

Along with protecting valuable electronics, leaving cell phones behind also helps to immerse participants in the natural beauty of Philmont. Many participants report being glad they left their phone back at base leaving behind stressors and distractions from coming on trail with them.

We encourage crews to share photos of their group through various resources such as Facebook, Dropbox, or Google Drive before leaving the ranch. A standalone camera is highly recommended. If you do not bring a personal camera, simply ask your fellow arrowmen to snap a picture of you during the trek and make sure to get access to the digital copies later!



### **Communication While in the Backcountry**

While participants are in the backcountry we seek to maintain immersion in the program by limiting non-essential communication by electronic devices. If guardians need to contact their scout for an emergency, please contact Philmont at (575) 376-2281. This number is answered 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. Because of the remoteness of Philmont's backcountry, it may take up to a day to deliver a message.

### **Travel**

For all participants traveling via train or plane travel, you will need to arrive the day prior to your trek start date. For all participants arriving by personal vehicle, you will need to arrive on the trek start date by 10:30 AM.

Participants should plan to depart on the last date of their trek. Participants traveling via the plane will depart Philmont in the morning and should schedule flights no earlier than 1:00 PM. Participants traveling via Amtrak will leave that late morning or afternoon from Philmont, and participants being picked up in personal vehicles should plan to be picked up by 10:00 AM. Participants should review the current shuttle information provided by Philmont before booking travel from Denver airport, Raton train station, or Albuquerque airport.

*Where can I find shuttle information?*

Current shuttle information can be found on the Philmont website, [Getting to Philmont](#). Third-party shuttle companies provide this service to Philmont. For any further questions about scheduling a shuttle to or from, please contact Philmont Seasonal Personnel at (575) 376- 2281.

### **Arriving Physically Prepared**

As an individual trek participant, it is solely your responsibility to be prepared physically for your adventure. If you do not exercise regularly, **you NEED to be training cardio three to five times per week in preparation.** Proper foot care while backpacking is an essential skill, and it begins with preparing for the long period of time spent on your feet, hiking over rugged terrain while wearing a heavy pack. Wear your boots regularly in the weeks leading up to your trek, and at least once wear them on a practice hike with all your gear you plan on bringing to Philmont.

As to what you should prepare for, well, we can tell you what to expect: *Expect days of double-digit hiking miles. Expect to be carrying a backpack that weighs more than 25%-30% of your bodyweight. Expect to always be going up or down. Expect every day to be filled with as many sights and activities as possible, never to waste a moment. And always expect to fall asleep as soon as your head hits the pillow!*

### **Proper Gear Selection**



With the combination of the outdoor conditions and physical challenges described above, we find it important to comment on gear selection in addition to the information in the Philmont Guidebook to Adventure. **The most important factor in gear selection is how well it fits your individual body!**

Plan sufficient space for crew gear and food in your backpack. Small-waisted participants need to ensure that their hip belt can be tightened sufficiently to support the weight of their pack on their hips. Tall participants need to double check that they have the correct frame size, allowing the weight to be transferred into the frame and off of the shoulders. The linked resource below covers both of these topics in detail. You should have experience hiking with the backpack you plan to bring to OA Trail Crew.

Your feet need to be well adjusted to your footwear before arriving at the ranch. **If you are purchasing new footwear for this adventure, you need to break them in before arriving at the ranch.** New boots that have not been broken in always result in blisters while hiking multiple days consecutively.

Your rain gear should be completely waterproof, not just water resistant. “Disposable” rain gear (emergency poncho or frogg toggs) is very fragile and more often than not becomes destroyed due to the rough nature of trail work and the backcountry. For a value-priced rain jacket, Philmont recommends the Red Ledge “Thunderlight Jacket” and “Rain Pant” as it is durable and will keep you dry. Quality rain gear is a wise investment.

If you have any more questions about preparing for Philmont, please contact the leadership for OA Trail Crew this summer. Additionally, attached is the [Philmont Scout Ranch preparedness seminar](#) page. Here you can find recordings of Philmont staff answering questions about this upcoming summer and recommendations for gear and physical preparedness. Be advised that the “Guidebook to Adventure” and preparedness seminar page are primarily for 12- and 7-day treks.

We hope this will allow you to be as prepared as possible on your arrival day, allowing you to focus on things of higher reward. The beauty of Northeast New Mexico, the brotherhood of our order, and an adventure of a lifetime await you. We look forward to your arrival this summer!

In Brotherhood,

Michael Colletti  
2025 OA Trail Crew Director

Shaw Smith  
2025 OA Trail Crew Coordinator

