

Troop 212, Winter Backpacking Trip, February 14-15-16, 2025

Dear Scouts and Scouters,

Our February backpacking adventure will take us into the local mountains to trek through forests and streams, hopefully with a beautiful blanket of snow on the ground. The destination is Lytle Creek, which runs behind Mt. Baldy and the San Gabriel Mountains. The two day loop trail totals around 9 miles with moderate elevation gain and descent.

Our adventure begins Friday evening, February 14th. We'll meet 7:00 pm at the Church parking lot and drive to the trailhead where we will camp near our vehicles for the night, acclimating to the roughly 5000 ft. elevation. On Saturday, we will enjoy a quick base camp breakfast, and then set off on foot to a remote, back woods destination chosen by the SPL, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, and the other experienced backpackers. Once the back woods camp has been reached, we will set up for cold weather camping, as well as low impact camping techniques. Scouts will be organized in teams of two or 3 participants per team, with each team being assigned a double walled winter tent and cook set(s) during the Thursday, Feb 13th, bag check gear pick-up meeting. Be sure to report to the Quartermaster the troop gear that you borrow.

Sunday morning, we will eat breakfast, break camp, making sure we practice our best Low Impact Camping Skills, then hike back to the vehicles following a different route. We will need to make an early departure time Sunday morning. We will be on the trail several hours on Sunday, so plan on having plenty of trail food for energy on the way to the vehicles, before heading home and stopping for lunch on the way home.

Just to be clear: be prepared with sufficient snacks and energy bars of your choice to hike until at least 2PM on Sunday.

Scouts are to be in Class B uniform for the drive to and from camp. Scouts may hike Saturday and Sunday in non-uniform clothing to ensure that they stay warm and dry. Upon reaching home, troop gear should be cleaned and dried at home, to be returned on Monday during the troop meeting. Be sure to check your troop-owned gear with the Quartermaster to ensure that you are clear.

Having adults that want to remain at base camp for the weekend is allowed, but is discouraged due to the unpredictable weather and that the troop trailer, unable to fit on the narrow dirt roads up to our Friday night camp, will not be part of this adventure.

Important Days and Costs:

Monday, February 10th at the Troop meeting: Please bring \$45 per hiker cash or to the troop meeting, with the standard permission slip (available on the Troop website). This covers 1 trail dinner, 2 breakfasts, equipment storage fee, program fees, and gas. Troop packs will be checked out at this meeting for those who need one. Be sure to report to the Quartermaster any troop gear that you borrow.

Thursday, February 13th at 7:00 PM: Our standard mandatory final "bag check" will be held at the church at 7pm, in our second-floor equipment room, where we will distribute the

backpacking food, stoves, fuel, and tents, ice spikes, enabling hikers to finish loading their packs for final weigh-in.

Friday, February 14th at 7:00 PM: Meet at the Church parking lot arrive promptly to allow for a quick visual pack inspection, vehicle loading, and timely departure. Drivers, be sure that your vehicles are fueled, ready to depart, before this meeting time.

Sunday, February 15th: Return to the Church at approximately 4PM to 5 PM. As usual, scouts will contact parents indicating estimated pick up time about 30 min prior to actual arrival. . Parents, please be on time for a timely pick up of all troop personnel, both scouts and scouters. Do not depart the parking lot for home until all troop gear has been accounted for and your SPL has dismissed you.

Equipment:

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate clothing (Day 40's to 50s/Night low teens) <input type="checkbox"/> Brim Hat sunny daytime <input type="checkbox"/> Warm hat for cold <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket Knife <input type="checkbox"/> Small Flashlight w/extra batteries <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen and Chapstick <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit <input type="checkbox"/> Compass <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking boots with extra socks <input type="checkbox"/> Boot spikes/crampons <input type="checkbox"/> Trek/ski poles w/basket <input type="checkbox"/> Gaiters	<input type="checkbox"/> Ground Cloth <input type="checkbox"/> Poncho/Rain Gear <input type="checkbox"/> Small baggy of Handy-wipes, Toothbrush & paste <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper & trowel <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottles – 2 liters (not“camelbacks”) <input type="checkbox"/> Mess Kit (utensils, bowl, mug) <input type="checkbox"/> Whistle <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Map (passed out at camp) <input type="checkbox"/> Warm gloves/Mittens. <input type="checkbox"/> Warm Sleeping Bag and Pad	<input type="checkbox"/> Matches or Flint <input type="checkbox"/> Pencils, Pens, Notebook <input type="checkbox"/> Rope – 10 Feet <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Small towels <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses/Ski goggles <input type="checkbox"/> Money for Sunday lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Favorite Trail Snacks for two days <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Lunch and possibly Sunday Trail lunch .
--	---	---

Important Equipment Notes:

1) We anticipate beginning the mountain portion of our hike on dirt, then possibly encountering snow as we climb into higher elevations. Ice spikes should be carried until they are needed. Gaiters can be fitted when dressing on Saturday morning. The decision to carry both gaiters and spikes will be made at the vehicles on Saturday upon visual determination of the need.

2) February temperatures range from the teens at night, to the 40's or 50 's during the day. If the sun shines, temperatures could reach the 50's. Hikers must be prepared for a very wide range of temperatures and maybe even some rain showers or snow showers. The weather forecast will be updated during the Thursday Pack Check.

3) Each backpacker is responsible for their own lunches and snacks. Lunches are Saturday and Sunday on the trail. We may stop at a restaurant on the way home, but do not count on this unless we depart camp on Sunday early enough. Also, remember that cold weather

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. Plan to carry 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. All participants should have their warm coats and flashlight readily available when we arrive at Friday camp and NOT packed in their backpacks.

Important Driver Notes:

1) Tire chains are not required. However, vehicles with sufficient clearance WILL be necessary. The road to the Friday night camp is similar to the our desert road trips, such as Randsburg. However, if you have snow chains handy, you might want to include them in your vehicle, along with a shovel.

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 for more information.

3) We encourage carpooling to keep our group safe, fuel costs as low as possible, and to adhere to the campgrounds' vehicle limitations.

John Douglas
Scoutmaster@troop212.net
310-628-4312