

Norther Tier High Adventure Camp 2024

Sunday July 21st 2024 to Wednesday July 31st 2024.

Adult organizer: [Chris May](#)

Scout organizer: TBD

Northern Tier is a canoe/backpacking trip that requires lengthy paddles and portaging your canoes over multiple small islands in the boundary waters between Minnesota and Ontario. It is very challenging, but a truly unique experience and considered to be the pinnacle of the 4 BSA high adventure camps. The purpose of this announcement is to provide access to as much information as we can, and to set expectations for scouts and parents about what is required to attend this adventure. Please don't let any of the following discourage you. Read through everything and send questions to Chris.

Projected Schedule. Details about travel to and from Northern Tier may change a little.

- Sunday July 21st fly to International Falls Airport (INL), Minnesota. Spend the night.
- Monday July 22nd bus to Atikokan, Ontario, Canada Base Camp. Spend the night.
- Tuesday July 23rd – Sunday July 28th on the water.
- Monday July 29th arrive back at Atikokan Base Camp. Spent the night.
- Tuesday July 30th bus to International Falls, MN after breakfast. Spent the night.
- Wednesday July 31st fly home to Atlanta.

The total cost of the trip could reach \$2500 per person. This may be offset by Tree Lot participation and other fundraising.

- \$1200 per person for Northern Tier Adventure itself.
- ~\$600 per person for round trip airfare.
- ~\$100 per person for round trip bus fare.
- ~\$100 per person 2 hotel nights.
- ~\$100 per person travel incidentals.
- ~\$200 per person special gear.
- ~\$200 per person passport.

Northern Tier refers to a group of participants and their guide as a "crew." Our crew will consist of 2 adult leaders, 9 scouts, and 1 "Interpreter" provided by Northern Tier to act as our guide. Our adult leaders are referred to as "Advisors." This is max number of scouts that we can take and the minimum number of adults.

Eligibility requirements to attend.

BSA and Northern Tier have requirements that must be met to attend and are fully outlined in the Advisors and Participants Guide linked at the end of this announcement. In brief, they are:

- Scouts must be 14 years old or 13 AND have completed the 8th grade.
- Must meet height/weight requirements: approx. 5'tall, 100-200lbs.
- BSA Medical forms specific to Northern Tier.
- Classified as a BSA Swimmer.
- Registered as a member of BSA.

In addition to BSA & Northern Tier, Troop 129 has additional requirements. The goal of these requirements is to make sure the attending scouts are prepared to have the best possible experience. Some of these requirements must be met quickly so we can gauge interest and head count, others must be met before the actual trip. It looks like a long list, but don't panic. Most scouts that are eligible by BSA & Northern Tier standards also meet many of these.

- Scouts must be and stay an active Troop member.
- Scouts must be and stay up to date on monthly dues.
- Scouts must be 2nd Class Rank for the next Court of Honor, September 26th, 2023.
- Scouts must be classified as a BSA Swimmer.
- Scouts must have current BSA Medical forms ABC reviewed by an Advisor. This is so any questions for Northern Tier can be asked and clarified early. If parents have an issue with this, please talk to Chris.
- Scouts and Parents must read and approve the conditions of the last page of the Northern Tier specific medical form. In the Spring, a physician will need to approve that the scout is medically cleared according to the demands listed. It's best if people know what to expect long beforehand. The specific medical form:
https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-001_ntier.pdf
- Scouts and Parents must learn about the Northern Tier program and what to expect. There are many youtube videos by Northern Tier and other Troops. Again, we don't want scouts or parents to be surprised. Check out the links at the end of this announcement.
- Scouts and Parents must be receiving Troop 129 emails (like the weekly communication) and signed up with the Troop 129 Remind. We really want the scouts to be engaged in what's happening in their Troop and develop digital skills (beyond Roblox). In preparation for Northern Tier, additional scouting events will be added, and we want solid communication. In accordance with Youth Protection, no scout should have any email or phone contact with adults, including leaders, without including their parent or guardian. If parents have an issue with this, please talk to Chris.

Scouts and Parents must make a commitment to participate in the following long-term items that happen over the next 11 months.

- Scouts must have a Passport. Processing times can last 3 months. Start the process early.
- Relevant merit badges are strongly encouraged to be completed or worked on: Canoeing / Kayaking, Personal Fitness, First Aid, Lifesaving, Camping, Cooking, Fishing.
- Scouts must be 1st Class Rank by April 1st, 2024.
- Scouts must complete BSA online modules Safety Afloat, Safe Swim Defense, & Hazardous Weather Training. These modules are intended for adult leaders, but the information is good,

and they are only about 30 minutes each. Finding these modules is a little tricky, details will be shared later.

- Scouts must complete the BSA Swimmer test in a lake with an Advisor observing. Splashing around in a swimming pool is not the same as needing to swim in dark, 60F water. In the wilderness, help is measured in half-days of time, not seconds as is the case at summer camp. Scouts need to be able to swim well, and properly rest to regain their strength.
- Scouts must attend at least 70% of auxiliary prep sessions, e.g. overnight canoe trips, paddling practice, portage practice, exercise events, skills training. Some sessions will be mandatory, but we'll work with everyone to schedule times that will work. These sessions will require parent participation. The trip Advisors can't do this alone. All scouts are welcome to attend any auxiliary event as long as there is sufficient supervision and their presence isn't hindering the training scouts.
- Scouts must maintain some kind of regular exercise that includes strength training. It would be a great time to start the Personal Fitness merit badge.
- Parents must stay current on payment schedule. TBD

We'd like all our scouts to have this experience, but in 2024 we only have enough space for 9 scouts. Rather than have a "race" to sign-up, we want scouts and parents to carefully review this information, ask questions, and decide if this adventure is their speed. If we end up having more committed scouts and parents than we have slots, we'll have a lottery. There will be other opportunities this year for scouts to enjoy some time on the water canoe camping.

The homepage for Northern Tier Canoe Treks: <https://www.ntier.org/canoetreks/>

Canoe Trek frequently asked questions: <https://www.ntier.org/faq/summerautumnfaq/>

The Advisor and Participant Guide contains almost everything about the logistics and requirements for all the canoe treks at Northern Tier. It is a lengthy read, but everyone that expresses interest in attending the adventure will be expected to have read the document. <https://www.ntier.org/canoetreks/advisors-guide-and-participant-handbook/>

Northern Tier specific medical form: https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-001_ntier.pdf