

Boy Scout Troop 202 / Venture Crew 202

2013 Philmont Trek

Q&A

Q: What is a Philmont trek?

A: A Philmont trek is a two week trip, with 10 days spent backpacking 5 to 12 miles per day in an isolated, mountainous area of New Mexico, at elevations ranging from 6,500 to 12,500 feet. The trip is physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. Each participant must carry a 35 to 50 pound pack, including his own gear and some shared crew gear. Climate conditions range from 30 to 90 degrees, from 10 to 30% humidity, and from intense sun to severe thunderstorms. Available activities include hiking, horseback riding, rock climbing, rappelling, pole climbing, black powder shooting, 12 gauge trap shooting, trail building, and other outdoor challenges.

Q: When will the Troop/Crew 202 trek be?

A: The trek will take place June 19 – July 3, 2013. Note that our trek will start on June 21st, though we will be travelling to New Mexico on June 19th to acclimate to the altitude.

Q: Who can attend?

A: All participants must meet age, rank, health, and height/weight requirements:

- Youth must be 14 years old (or complete 8th grade and be 13 years old) prior to departure.
- Scouts must be at least Life rank.
- All participants must be in good health, obtain doctor's release, and be able to hike with a pack.
- Each participant must be within the allowable weight range for his height.
- Each participant must be a registered member of Venturing Crew 202.
- Emotional/mental maturity is just as important as physical maturity in enjoying a successful trek. If a Scout is not ready during summer 2013 to participate, other opportunities will be available during succeeding years.

Q: How do I become a registered member of Venturing Crew 202?

A: Since Crew 202 was the group that was awarded the Philmont spots, all participants must be registered with Crew 202 prior to roster submission. Here's what is required:

- Fill out a second Scout membership application for Crew 202 (no additional cost)
- Pay \$2 per month to Venturing Crew for membership (based on when you register)
- Purchase a blue Venturing Crew 202 polo – this will be our class A uniform for the trip
- For adults, complete Venturing Crew training
 - Youth protocol training (online). This is different than Boy Scout YPT.
 - Complete Venturing Leader Training. We'll try to schedule a meeting at Seton to complete this training as a group and fill out the necessary paperwork.

Q: Can adults attend?

A: Yes, adults are needed to supervise, starting with crew preparation and throughout the trek. A crew consists of 8 youth members and no more than 4 adult leaders. Leaders will be required to participate in training and crew conditioning prior to the trek. One crew may be co-ed. In this event, at least one of the leaders must also be co-ed.

Q: When will Philmont crews be formed?

A: Philmont crews will be formed in October, 2012, after we've gotten to know each other. Crew leaders will be selected by each Crew in the spring.

Q: How will we get there?

A: The contingent will fly together from Indianapolis to the most economical regional hub (probably Denver), and travel from there by motor vehicle to Philmont Ranch. It is planned that a day will be spent making side trips to acclimate to the higher elevation before reaching Philmont.

Q: How much will it cost? When are payments due?

A: Total cost is estimated around \$1400 for each crew member, youth or adult.

- \$100/person Philmont deposit due by April 15, 2012.
- \$335.00 second Philmont payment due by October 1, 2012.
- \$335.00 third Philmont payment due by March 1, 2013.
- Airfare and ground transportation cost is due when booked by Troop 202.
- All fee payments are non-refundable.
- Opportunities for individual and group fund raising will be sought.
- Partial scholarships are available through Philmont.

Q: What is a typical day like at Philmont?

A: Most crews start their day early to get most of the hiking done before it gets hot. Wake up at 5:00 – 5:30 a.m., eat a quick breakfast, break camp and start hiking. In general, it's preferred to get to your destination campsite for the day as early as possible, to choose a campsite, participate in scheduled activities, do side hikes, or relax.

Q: How far will we hike?

A: The 2013 treks have not been released, though we expect we will hike between 5 and 12 miles per day for 10 days. Once the trek listing for 2013 is available, we will work as a group to decide on our specific trek. We anticipate having one crew that opts for higher mileage, and one that chooses more moderate mileage and more program activities. However, this will be the decision of the individual crews once they are formed.

Q: Will we have a guide for the trek?

A: For the first several days of the trek, a Philmont Ranger will accompany each crew. The Ranger will train the crew on the skills needed to navigate the remainder of the trek. After the first several days, the crew will be in contact with Philmont staff periodically at staffed camps.

Q: What will we eat on the trek?

A: Food will be provided by Philmont during our trek. We will pick up food every 2-3 days from checkpoints along our route, so we will always be carrying several days of food with us. The food consists of pre-packaged convenience items such as cereal and protein bars, nuts, and dried fruits, and dehydrated entrees and vegetables for at least one hot meal per day. If a crew member has a medical or religious need for a restricted diet, some accommodations are available, but bringing alternative food from home is also an option. Any crew member with this concern should discuss it with his/her adult leaders well in advance of the trek.

Q: How much weight will I have to carry in my pack?

A: Each hiker will carry between 35 – 50 pounds in their pack each day, not to exceed 30% of their body weight. In addition to personal gear, troop gear, food and water for cooking will be divided between the crew to carry each day.

Q: What preparation will be involved?

A: The Troop will schedule a number of hikes for physical conditioning, and several gear shakedown events to ensure readiness. Both youth and adult crew members will be required to participate in these events and in training required prior to departure. A Readiness Card with specific requirements for hiking and shakedown outings will be provided to each participant. Your progress towards readiness will be checked throughout the training process to make sure you are properly preparing for this trip.

Q: What gear will I need?

A: A full gear list will be provided during trip preparation, though the key items each participant will need includes the following. Most of these items will be needed throughout training so they can be broken in and tested. During outings we will discuss various equipment requirements and suggestions, and are also considering some group trips to local backpacking stores for more guidance.

- Sleeping bag – good to at least 30 degrees
- Sleeping pad - lightweight
- Backpack – fit is very important
- Sturdy hiking boots – Vasque leather boots are popular for this trip
- Versatile clothing layers
- Hydration system - Nalgene bottles and/or Camelbak type containers

Q: Are there alternatives to buying all this gear?

A: Yes. Backpacks can be rented from the Scout store, and a gear swap will be scheduled for later this summer for those who have backpacking gear that they no longer need. It's important that your gear fits properly and is comfortable, so you'll want to account for appropriate break-in and training time with all of your gear. It's especially important boots are sized properly and broken in with at least 50-100 miles of hiking prior to the trip. Scouts whose feet are still growing should buy boots in the March timeframe, and put as many miles as possible on them before the trek.

Q: What will the commitment contract involve?

A: Each crew member will sign a contract committing to making himself eligible for participation (rank, age, fitness), following directions and completing required preparation, making all scheduled payments on time, completing all required paperwork, remaining in good standing in the Troop and Crew, and living at all times by the Scout Oath and Law.