

10th Mountain's Backcountry Exploration Program

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10th Mountain's Backcountry Exploration Program encourages the use of huts by educational non-profits, promotes a better understanding and appreciation of the natural mountain environment, and develops individual self-reliance among hut users. To this end, we assist non-profits financially, and offer guidance in trip planning. Who can participate? Non-profits with an educational emphasis such as schools, youth organizations, churches, and senior citizen groups have received up to 50% off on whole hut rentals (Monday–Thursday nights).

To get started, read the following, complete our preferred online [Discovery Questionnaire](#) (also available as a [PDF](#)) and submit a copy of your organization's Colorado Certificate of Exemption for Sales & Use Tax (shows a 98-XXXXX number). Discounted reservations can't be made online, so give us a call at 970/925-5775 M – F, 8 – 4 to discuss availability, hut options (see also [Family & Kids Trips](#)), and to book a trip!

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The Backcountry Exploration Program is funded in part by the Tenth Mountain Division Foundation, Inc. to honor all 10th Mountain Division soldiers killed in action, veterans, and the legacy they created.

ALPINE RESOURCE CENTER (Located near Leadville, the moderate route to Sangree's climbs 1,470 feet over 3.2 miles.)

One unique option for educational groups is the Sangree M. Froelicher Hut, home of the **Alpine Resource Center**. The Center is a 600 square foot seminar room on the lower level of the hut, offering classroom tables, a library with 300+ books, its own heat stove, and 10 beds (increasing the hut capacity to 26). The Center provides a *unique educational setting*, encouraging the exploration of mountain ecology, mining history, astronomy, land stewardship, and history of the 10th Mountain troops. The seminar area is open to qualifying non-profits free of charge; the additional 10 sleeping spaces can be booked by these groups only on an as-needed basis at the same discounted rate as the hut.

RESERVATION POLICIES

- **Discounts** Qualifying groups may receive up to 50% off on whole hut rentals, Mon – Thurs nights, year-round. No discounts are available Fri, Sat, Sun or holidays. Some hut and season-specific restrictions may apply.
- **Payment** We will invoice your organization. Payment is due within 30 days from the date of the reservation. We must have your non-profit number on file and payment must come directly from the non-profit organization.
- **Cancellation Policy** Changes or cancellations require a 30-day advance notice for 80% hut credit. Cancellations made less than 30 days prior to the trip start date result in forfeiture of your payment. No refunds.
- **Waivers** Each participant must complete and submit a waiver before the start of the trip. A link to the online waiver form will be emailed to you with your confirmation letter when we have received payment for your trip.
- **Membership and Early Bookings** Non-profit groups can become 10th Mountain members, and can participate in our early booking lottery for the following winter season. Contact us for additional details.

WORK PROJECTS

Hut maintenance is largely supported by volunteer hours. We offer free or discounted hut space in exchange for volunteer projects. This hut space can be used for the current trip or for a trip at a later date. Projects usually take 6+ hours and may include hut cleaning, painting, firewood stacking, landscaping, and snow shoveling. 10th Mountain provides all tools, equipment and supervision. Work projects may not always be available.

LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be strongly considered when choosing a trip leader and planning your trip. Group leaders must be qualified and must be responsible for making effective decisions in the field. If your group does not have someone with sufficient leadership skills, workshops may be offered by outdoor shops or schools in your area, or there are guide services listed on our website that may be of assistance to your group.

Suggested Outdoor Skills and Group Equipment (See www.huts.org for suggested equipment lists by season.)

- **Current First Aid & CPR/Wilderness First Responder** is highly recommended. Knowledge of your group's medical conditions and requirements, prior to the trip is strongly suggested.
- **Winter Skills:** Backcountry skiing/snowshoeing experience, knowledge of equipment, use of skins, wax, and repair. Experience using map, compass, altimeter, and navigating in white-out conditions. Avalanche awareness: stability evaluation, route selection, and rescue. Winter survival techniques and driving skills on snow-packed winter roads.
- **Summer Skills:** Hiking/backpacking experience (including navigation, familiarity with terrain, and knowledge of alpine weather patterns), mountain-biking experience including riding skills, bike repair, and 4 wheel driving skills.

- **Group First Aid Kit:** appropriate size for the group and leaders' level of training.
- **Group Survival Kit:** at least one of each of the following items per group: shelter, emergency stove, small cooking pot, fire-starter and fuel, extra ground pad, extra sleeping bag, water purification method(s), and a snow shovel (in case of an emergency winter bivouac). If your group plans to travel in avalanche prone terrain, it is strongly recommended that each person have an avalanche shovel, beacon and probe poles.
- **Extra Group Clothing:** including hat, gloves, and an insulating layer. This may be useful for a participant who has forgotten their gear, or for replacing gear that has become wet while in use.
- **Group Repair Kit:** appropriate for winter ski/snowshoe equipment or summer mountain biking/hiking.
- **Group Maps for Navigation:** 7½ minute USGS map(s), 10th Mountain map(s), compass, altimeter and GPS.
- **Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search & Rescue Card:** 10th Mountain suggests that each hut trip participant purchase a CORSAR Card: \$3 per person, per year. Purchase through 10th Mountain & at many outdoor retailers.

Other Leadership Considerations

- Travel on skis, snowshoes, bicycles or foot – can become very complex in the backcountry due to route conditions, weather, route finding, avalanche, injuries or ill-prepared participants.
- Participants should take responsibility for their own health and comfort as well as for the comfort of others.
- It is helpful to discuss cold injury awareness and to demonstrate clothing and layering before the trip.
- Leaders should pre-travel a hut route to check for unique aspects and route alternatives.
- Be realistic about travel plans. A foot of fresh snow can slow down even strong groups.
- Tour with the group at least one week before the trip; check equipment, clothing and overall ability of the group.
- For winter trips, the more avalanche awareness/training a group has the better. Leaders should have experience in choosing alternate ski routes when skiing off 10th Mountain's suggested routes. Practice with beacons, probe poles and shovels will benefit all members of the group.
- We encourage use of the hut logbooks. Please provide younger hut users with reasonable guidelines.
- Share your backcountry knowledge and survival skills. Knowledge about bivouac techniques, snow shelter construction, and emergency fire techniques are always helpful.
- A brief session on waxing/skin use (winter) or bike repair (summer) will save priceless minutes and hours on the trail.
- Educate participants about hydration & staying nourished during the journey to and while at the hut.
- Make sure that the last person to arrive is not the only one to have the confirmation/hut combination.
- Upon arrival, review fire escape routes and evacuation procedures; locate fire extinguishers and escape ladders, and educate group about use of gas and wood-burning stoves. No smoking is allowed in the hut or outbuildings.

IDEAS FOR EDUCATION

The unique, outdoor hut experience is conducive to learning. To complement your educational goals, an interpretive library is provided at most huts (titles below), and our Alpine Resource Center at Sangree's Hut has an expanded library plus a meeting room. Some interesting **topics** to explore while at the hut include:

- Environment: Conservation, Low Impact Recreation, & Leave No Trace Principles (see below)
- Ecology: Alpine Flora and Fauna, Snow and Watershed Systems
- Group Living: Leadership, Group Dynamics, Conflict Resolution
- Creative Learning: Painting, Journal Writing, Skits, Photography
- History: [History of the Huts](#), [10th Mountain Division History](#), [Warren Miller's Climb to Glory](#), [Fire on the Mountain](#)
- Avalanche Awareness: The Colorado Mountain Club has developed high school level avalanche activities for winter hut trips: [Avalanche Triangle Curriculum](#), [Avalanche Triangle Game Materials](#), [Snow Pit Curriculum](#)
- Other: Map/Compass, Winter Survival, Astronomy, Geology

Several **books** suggested by educators with activities appropriate for the hut environment are listed below. While designed for kids, many activities are appropriate for all ages. These books are not available at the huts.

- [Hands-On Nature: Information & Activities for Exploring the Environment With Children](#) (Lingelbach & Purcell)
- [Sharing Nature With Children](#) (Joseph Cornell)
- The Keepers Series (Michael J. Caduto & Joseph Bruchac)
- Ranger Rick's NatureScope Series (National Wildlife Federation)

Some Titles from Interpretive Libraries found at most huts:

365 Starry Nights
Another Wilderness
Audubon Field Guides
Basic Essentials of Map & Compass
Climber's Guide to Mountain Sickness
Colorado Hut to Hut

Crinkleroot's Book of Animal Tracking
Earth Speaks
Falling Season
Field Guide to Mammal Tracking
Gentle Expeditions
Geologic Story of the Aspen Region
Golden: A Guide to Field ID of Birds
Hypothermia, Frostbite & Cold Injuries

Land Above the Trees: Alpine Tundra
Land Navigation Handbook
MAC's Flower Chart
Medicine for Mountaineering
Memoirs of a Ski Trooper
Outward Bound Wilderness First Aid
PDQ Telemark Technique
People & Nature in the Hut Region

LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES (For more info visit <https://lnt.org/> or contact NOLS at 800-332-4100.)

More people are seeking the beauty of backcountry environments. To lessen this increased impact, please:

- **Plan ahead and prepare.** Unnecessary impact in backcountry areas can be avoided with proper preparation and education. Teach the Leave No Trace principles before you go on the trip.
- **Travel lightly.** Skis, snowshoes, hiking boots and bikes do a good job of traveling lightly. Stay on existing routes.
- **Pack it in, pack it out.** Do not burn trash in the hut stoves. Carry out all excess food, trash bags are provided.
- **Practice good sanitation.** Each hut's toilet concentrates and controls human waste. Don't urinate around the hut! While enroute, cover yellow snow and urinate away from the main trail. If you must use toilet paper, carry it out.
- **Leave what you find.** Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them. Do not build structures.
- **Respect wildlife.** Disturbance of wildlife is a major concern. Avoid the urge to approach or feed wildlife. Animals do not need increased pressures during winter when they normally escape human encroachment. Feeding wildlife compromises their ability to carry out normal behaviors. If they're eating chips, they're not eating pine nuts!
- **Reduce your impact on other visitors.** Be courteous. Share the trail. Many visitors are disturbed by the use of portable devices when trying to get away from technology. If you choose to use such items, do so unobtrusively.

ETIQUETTE ▪ HYGIENE ▪ UPKEEP

Let's keep the hut experience positive and the huts in great condition. Share these important practices with your group, and check out our short [Hut Planning & Arrival](#), [Hut Set Up](#), and [Hut Clean Up](#) videos.

Etiquette

- Respect hut capacities - no extra guests or overflow camping.
- 10th Mountain discourages use of snowmobiles to access huts. Respect non-motorized areas around the huts.
- Be courteous - quiet hours 10pm - 7am.
- If celebrating, book a whole hut.
- Arrival and departure time is 1pm.
- Choose your bed on arrival; store gear on or under your bed.
- Smoking not permitted in huts or outbuildings.
- Outdoor fires allowed during summer only in provided metal fire rings. Respect fire bans.
- Burn firewood judiciously, huts easily over-heat.
- Don't monopolize kitchen or communal areas.
- Use designated storage, or hang food in cold/inside location. Never leave food outside.
- Respect guests wanting to unplug, use devices discreetly.

Hygiene

- Dogs not allowed.
- Don't urinate in the snow at the hut - use the outhouse.
- Collect clean snow for snowmelt water/keep lid on snowmelt pot & hands out.
- Filter (bring your own) or boil snowmelt & any collected water before drinking.
- Cistern water can be used for dishwashing: wash with hot, soapy water, add ½ cap bleach to rinse.
- Thoroughly clean & disinfect food prep surfaces.
- Use provided hand sanitizer.
- For personal hygiene, bring disposable wipes & use marked personal wash bucket only.
- Spit toothpaste in sink, flush with water.
- Bring your own pillow case.

Upkeep Before departure:

- Sweep & clean kitchen/dining areas.
- Carry out garbage/leftover food.
- Split kindling/restock wood.
- Put cold ashes in metal drum.
- Turn stoves, lights & appropriate solar switches off.
- Close/lock all windows & doors.