



NATIONAL LEAVE NO TRACE PROGRAM TRAINING GUIDELINES

January 2015

A. INTRODUCTION

The national Leave No Trace training program has grown to include over 6,500 Leave No Trace Master Educators and over 38,000 Leave No Trace Trainers. As the number of institutions, organizations, and agencies interested in offering Leave No Trace training programs increases, so does the importance of having standardized guidelines that provide a framework for effective Leave No Trace training.

The goals for these Training Guidelines are five-fold:

- To strive for consistent, quality training for all Leave No Trace course participants;
- To provide an easily implemented training structure that encourages training efforts;
- To establish a structure that allows the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (the Center) to track and quantify training efforts;
- To clarify the role of the Center in regard to training institutions and individual Master Educators and Trainers;
- To identify that there are inherent risks in outdoor activities and to discuss warnings and other information pertaining to Leave No Trace courses.

The Training Guidelines describe three levels of Leave No Trace training in detail: Master Educator, Trainer, and Awareness. Fees may be charged for these courses, details of which are described under each heading. Other training options – ranger talks, seminars, clinics, and informal presentations – exist and are being implemented on an ad hoc basis. Although such departures from formal training are valuable and encouraged, the Center provides set curriculum for only Master Educator Courses, Trainer Courses, and Awareness Workshops. It is encouraged that Leave No Trace materials be used in all training activities regardless of the length or type of training.

The Center and its Review & Research Network (RRN) oversee Leave No Trace training efforts, curriculum development, and material production. The RRN also assists with approving organizations to conduct Leave No Trace Master Educator Courses. The Center will review, select, and approve organizations to offer the Master Educator Courses, pursuant to the guidelines outlined below, at its sole discretion.

Organizations (including approved Master Educator Course Providers) and individual Master Educators teaching Trainer Courses must enter into a *Training Agreement* with the Center (forms available from www.LNT.org), and must review and follow the guidelines identified here before, during, and after conducting any formal Leave No Trace courses.

The Leave No Trace curriculum focuses on techniques for learning and teaching minimum impact outdoor skills and ethics. Leave No Trace courses do not teach specific outdoor skills such as mountain climbing, river crossings, camping, etc. However, due to the nature of the Leave No Trace program, many courses are taught in outdoor settings. Engaging in outdoor activities involves inherent or other risks and dangers that can lead to injury, property damage or even death. In addition, Leave No Trace outdoor ethics and principles are only effective if they are accurately relayed and taught to course participants. For these reasons, the Center requires organizations and individuals interested in conducting Leave No Trace courses to enter into a *Training Agreement* with the Center (forms available from www.LNT.org) and review and follow the guidelines listed here before, during, and after conducting courses. These Guidelines and the *Training Agreement* are not intended to control the details of how the organization/individual conducts the Leave No Trace course. The Center does not control, teach or conduct the course, but rather, provides organizations and individuals with nationally approved materials to assist in the teaching of Leave No Trace courses. All organizations and individuals conducting Leave No Trace courses act as independent contractors and are solely responsible for the conduct of the courses.

Individuals interested in participating in a Leave No Trace course should have basic outdoor travel and camping skills and be in reasonably good physical condition before attending a course. Participants should understand that they are responsible for their own safety, and assume responsibility for injuries resulting from the inherent risks of recreational activities.

The Center does not warrant or guarantee the quality or expertise of any individual or organization providing a Leave No Trace course. Those individuals interested in a Leave No Trace course are advised to independently review and examine the qualifications of individuals or organizations planning to conduct Leave No Trace courses.

B. TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS, MASTER EDUCATORS, TRAINERS, AND OTHERS — PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. Organizations Offering Master Educator Courses

The Center strives to select the most professional, responsible, and qualified organizations to offer and conduct Leave No Trace Master Educator Courses. Interested organizations will be asked to provide some or all of the following information and documentation. The Center will select organizations based upon its review of this material as well as consideration of other factors:

- a. Application, including a brief statement made by the organization outlining the reasons why it is committed to teaching Leave No Trace and disseminating Leave No Trace information;
- b. Evidence that the organization possesses appropriate risk management plans and procedures for e.g.: evacuation, serious incidents;
- c. Evidence of an annual report, board of directors and history of operations;
- d. A list of references for the Center to contact for additional information about the organization;
- e. Organized policies and procedures for running the organization;
- f. Evidence that staff are trained in outdoor leadership/instruction and possess any necessary licenses to provide services;
- g. Examination of serious incident reports on any serious injuries or fatalities occurring in the last two (2) years;
- h. Copies of any safety or peer reviews (internal or external) conducted in the last two (2) years;
- i. Copies of all required permits or licenses to operate or to run operations on municipal, state or federal lands; and the evidence of compliance with any applicable laws or regulations;
- j. Proof of appropriate levels of insurance;
- k. Proof of the ability to efficiently manage student screening and enrollment functions;
- l. Evidence of appropriate outdoor/recreational activity and risk disclosure to participants- e.g. in brochures, assumption of risk/release documents, registration materials, pre-trip talks;
- m. Evidence of any professional affiliations, accreditation, and certification.

Those organizations selected to offer and conduct Leave No Trace Master Educator Courses must comply with the *Leave No Trace Training Agreement for Master Educator Courses* and follow the Guidelines included here. This includes:

- a. Possessing appropriate levels of insurance;
- b. Assuring that staff of that organization, including any proposed Leave No Trace lead instructors and/or co-instructors, are appropriately trained in outdoor

leadership/instruction skills, and maintain appropriate levels of emergency medical certification;

- c. Distributing the Leave No Trace introduction and discussion of the *Course Participant Acknowledgement, Assumption of Risks, Release and Indemnity Agreement*;
- d. Following the “Core Components for Master Educator Course Curriculum,” and following additional Guidelines for courses outlined below, in any course;
- e. Using the Center-approved Master Educator curriculum (the *Master Educator Handbook*) with consideration to existing copyrights.

2. Organizations Offering Trainer Courses

Organizations offering Leave No Trace Trainer Courses must comply with the *Leave No Trace Training Agreement* (available from www.LNT.org) and follow the Guidelines included here. This includes:

- a. Possessing appropriate levels of insurance;
- b. Assuring that staff, including any proposed Leave No Trace lead instructors and/or co-instructors, are appropriately trained in outdoor leadership/instruction skills, and maintain appropriate levels of emergency medical certification;
- c. Distributing the Leave No Trace introduction and discussion of the *Course Participant Acknowledgement, Assumption of Risks, Release and Indemnity Agreement*;
- d. Following the “Core Components for Trainer Course Curriculum,” and additional Guidelines for courses outlined below, in any Trainer Course;

3. Individual Master Educators Offering Trainer Courses

Those successfully completing the Master Educator Course are able to conduct Trainer Courses. Although Master Educators do not need to be affiliated with an organization to offer Trainer courses, Master Educators must be a current member of Leave No Trace, comply with the *Leave No Trace Training Agreement* (available from www.LNT.org), and follow the Guidelines included here. This includes:

- a. Possessing appropriate levels of insurance (federal tort claim coverage is acceptable);
- b. Maintaining appropriate levels of emergency medical certification;
- c. Distributing the Leave No Trace introduction and discussion of the *Course Participant Acknowledgement, Assumption of Risks, Release and Indemnity Agreement*;
- d. Following the “Core Components for Trainer Course Curriculum,” and additional Guidelines for courses outlined below, in any Trainer Course.

4. Organizations Offering Awareness Workshops

Organizations offering Leave No Trace Awareness Workshops are strongly encouraged to become a partner organization of the Center, and must follow the Guidelines included here (for more information on partnerships, visit www.LNT.org). This includes:

- a. Assuring that staff, including any proposed Leave No Trace instructors or co-instructors, are appropriately trained in outdoor leadership/instruction skills
- b. Following the “Core Components for Awareness Workshop Curriculum,” and additional Guidelines for courses outlined below, in any Awareness Workshop.

5. Individuals Offering Awareness Workshops

Individuals offering Leave No Trace Awareness Workshops are strongly encouraged to become a member of Leave No Trace, and must follow the Guidelines included here (for more information on membership, visit www.LNT.org). This includes:

- a. Those successfully completing the Master Educator or Trainer Course are able to conduct Awareness Workshops.
- b. Others who are familiar with Leave No Trace but have received no formal Leave No Trace training are also encouraged to conduct Awareness Workshops.
- c. Following the “Core Components for Awareness Workshop Curriculum,” and additional Guidelines for courses outlined below, in any Awareness Workshop.
- d. Although Master Educators, Leave No Trace Trainers and/or others do not need to be affiliated with an organization to offer Awareness Workshops, individual Masters, Trainers and/or others are strongly encouraged to be members of Leave No Trace (for more information on membership, visit www.LNT.org), and must follow the Guidelines included below.

C. LEAVE NO TRACE MASTER EDUCATOR COURSE

1. Curriculum Content

A Leave No Trace Master Educator Course emphasizes skills and techniques essential to Leave No Trace minimum impact outdoor ethics and education. **As stated in the Introduction above, Leave No Trace courses do not teach basic travel, camping or other outdoor skills, nor do they provide outdoor instructor certification.** A Leave No Trace Master Course includes a minimum of four eight-hour days and at least three nights camping in the field, and must be staffed by a qualified lead instructor and a qualified co-instructor.

Core Components for Master Educator Course Curriculum

1. Review of the role of a Leave No Trace Master Educator.

2. Discussion and practice of the principles and ethics of Leave No Trace.
3. Discussion of the Leave No Trace training concept and Training Guidelines.
4. Overview of Leave No Trace-related research: recreation ecology and human dimensions of natural resources, and types of resource and social impacts.
5. Discussion of Leave No Trace teaching skills and techniques, student learning styles and development of lesson plans.
6. Development of a Leave No Trace Action Plan.
7. At least one student led teaching exercise by each participant.
8. Focus on interactive and hands-on field experiences.
9. Review of the mission and need for the Leave No Trace program.
10. A historical overview of the Leave No Trace program.
11. Discussion of the role, function and administrative structure of federal and/or state land management agencies' Leave No Trace programs.
12. Overview of the role, function and structure of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics.

2. Master Educator Course: Lead Instructor

The lead instructor for a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course must be a Master Educator of Leave No Trace and either be employed by an organization approved to conduct Leave No Trace Master Educator Courses or retained by such an organization for the purposes of conducting a Leave No Trace Master Course. A lead instructor must co-instruct one or more approved Master Educator Courses prior to serving as a lead instructor or, at a minimum, must successfully instruct at least two Leave No Trace Trainer Courses prior to serving as a lead instructor. (Note: The substitution of teaching two Trainer Courses is a less-preferred option intended to assist new Master Educator Course providers in developing a qualified cadre of Master Educator Course instructors.) The qualifying Master Educator or Trainer Courses must be co-instructed with a different Master Educator than the one who facilitated the instructor's Master Educator Course. Leave No Trace Master Educator Courses should include a lead instructor assisted by at least one co-instructor. A lead instructor should have training and experience in outdoor leadership/instruction skills and maintain appropriate levels of emergency medical certification. At a minimum, the lead instructor should maintain a current certification in CPR and as a First Responder. If a lead instructor or co-instructor must be replaced in the event of a last-minute emergency, and the Provider cannot locate a replacement that fulfills these criteria, the Center should be contacted immediately. The Center will offer assistance in locating a qualified lead or co-instructor from other Master Educator Course providers or land management agencies. In the event that this is not possible, the Center can grant an exception on a case-by-case basis.

3. Master Educator Course: Co-instructors

The co-instructor for a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course must be a Master Educator of Leave No Trace and be employed by or directly affiliated with an approved Master Educator Course Provider. Co-instructors should have experience as teacher/trainers within their respective organizations, including instruction of at least one overnight Leave No Trace Trainer Course. Co-instructors should have training and experience in outdoor leadership/instruction skills and maintain appropriate levels of emergency medical certification. At a minimum, co-instructors should maintain current certification in Standard First Aid and CPR. The Center encourages, when possible, the presence of qualified agency-affiliated co-instructors on Master Educator Courses to provide participants with a perspective on the management and use of public lands.

4. Master Educator Course: Enrollment

Master Educator Courses will be limited to a maximum of twelve (12) participants and one lead instructor and at least one co-instructor. When the managing agency where the course is conducted has group size limitations requiring smaller groups, course size may be further limited, and must be in compliance with group size regulations. Requests for group size waivers may be submitted. In order to maximize educational perspectives, a diverse group of participants from different agencies and organizations is highly encouraged.

All enrollment in a Master Educator Course should occur with full understanding that in the event an enrolled participant cannot attend the course, either a replacement person from that organization or agency can be sent, or the organization/agency or individual may forfeit all or part of the tuition, per the policy of the offering organization.

5. Master Educator Course: Cost

The Center will review Leave No Trace Master Educator Course tuition costs prior to the establishment of the annual Master Educator Course training calendar. Every effort will be made to agree upon a fair and equitable cost for both the training organization and the student/participant. Course costs set by course providers do not include travel (and associated travel costs) to and from the course for participants.

Course tuition discounts may be extended to applicable partners if they provide cost saving logistical support, host facilities, equipment, and/or other services to the course provider. Any discounts offered are done so at the discretion of the course provider.

The Center will review but not set course costs for Master Educator Courses offered by approved course providers.

6. Master Educator Course: Completion

Upon successful completion of a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course, each participant will become a Leave No Trace Master Educator and will receive a completion certificate from the course provider. Successful completion of the course requires participation in all

course activities and teaching exercises. Those who complete the Master Educator Course are equipped to:

- Understand, demonstrate and teach state of the art minimum impact outdoor techniques, with the ability to train others as Leave No Trace Trainers;
- Lead a discussion on outdoor ethics and help others explore and define their own personal outdoor ethic;
- Develop and share an action plan for teaching the public about Leave No Trace;
- Offer Leave No Trace Awareness Workshops.

All participants of a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course shall be asked to complete the Center's course evaluation form, copies of which must be submitted to the Center by the course provider.

The Center, in consultation with its course providers, reserves the right to deny a Master Educator certificate of completion if in the eyes of both instructors, the participant has **not**: 1) attended the entire course; 2) displayed the skills necessary to train Trainers, conduct outreach programs or otherwise disseminate Leave No Trace skills and ethics in a productive way; or 3) exhibited behavior consistent with the Leave No Trace philosophy. Should a course participant display or engage in any of the aforementioned, adequate documentation is required by the course instructors, and should be forwarded to the Center upon course completion.

D. LEAVE NO TRACE TRAINER COURSES

1. Curriculum Content

A Leave No Trace Trainer Course is a modified version of a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course. The Trainer Course is shorter, less comprehensive and less expensive to conduct than a Master Educator Course. Like Master Educator Courses, Leave No Trace Trainer Courses emphasize skills and techniques essential to Leave No Trace minimum impact outdoor ethics and education. **However, Leave No Trace Trainer Courses do not teach basic travel, camping or other outdoor skills, nor do they provide outdoor instructor certification.** Sample Trainer Course curricula and other resources are available through the Center.

Core Components for Trainer Course Curriculum

1. A minimum of sixteen (16) total hours of experiential instruction, ten (10) hours of which must be conducted in the field. One night camping is strongly recommended but not required.
2. The role and function of a Leave No Trace Trainer.
3. The principles and ethics of Leave No Trace.
4. Teaching skills and techniques and student learning styles.
5. At least one student led teaching exercise by each participant.

6. Overview of the national Leave No Trace program.
7. The role and function of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics.

2. Trainer Course: Lead Instructor

The lead instructor for a Trainer Course must be a Leave No Trace Master Educator. Leave No Trace Trainer Course lead instructors should have training and experience in outdoor leadership/instruction skills and maintain appropriate levels of emergency medical certification. At a minimum, the lead instructor should maintain current certification in Standard First Aid and CPR. Master Educators wishing to offer Trainer Courses must also complete the online Leave No Trace Master Educator Refresher (www.LNT.org) course within two (2) years of taking their original Master Educator Course, and must retake the refresher every two (2) years thereafter in order to remain qualified to offer Leave No Trace Trainer Courses. Additionally, any Master Educator offering Trainer Courses must be a current member of Leave No Trace (visit www.LNT.org for membership information).

3. Trainer Course: Co-instructors

A co-instructor for a Leave No Trace Trainer Course can be a Leave No Trace Master Educator or Leave No Trace Trainer. Co-instructors should have experience as teachers/trainers within their respective organizations, ideally including instruction on at least one overnight Leave No Trace course. Co-instructors should have training and experience in outdoor leadership/instruction skills and appropriate levels of emergency medical certification. At a minimum, co-instructors should maintain current certification in Standard First Aid and CPR. If a co-instructor is a Leave No Trace Master Educator, he or she must also complete the online Leave No Trace Master Educator Refresher (www.LNT.org) course within two (2) years of taking his or her original Master Educator Course, and must retake the refresher every two (2) years thereafter in order to remain qualified to co-instructing Leave No Trace Trainer Courses.

4. Trainer Course: Enrollment

Trainer Courses must have a minimum of four (4) course participants as this minimum number better ensures a quality experiential learning opportunity for all participants. In the event that meeting the minimum number of participants is not possible, the Center may grant an exception on a case-by-case basis. The Center should be contacted *prior* to offering any Trainer Course with fewer than four (4) participants. While there is no maximum number of participants, the Center strongly recommends that organizations and individuals offering Trainer Courses strive to keep the instructor to student ratio low to enhance learning opportunities. Course size should be in compliance with stated group size limits for the area where the course is offered.

Trainer Course lead instructors must contact land managers at the intended course location *prior* to any course to ensure compliance with permitting and group size requirements.

5. Trainer Course: Cost

Course costs for Leave No Trace Trainer Courses are not set by the Center. Course leaders and/or organizations should set the cost of Trainer Courses to cover material, travel, staff and other costs. The Center encourages course leaders and/or organizations to make Trainer Course tuition as low as possible to encourage enrollment and training efforts.

6. Trainer Course: Completion

Upon successful completion of a Leave No Trace Trainer Course, each participant will become a Leave No Trace Trainer and receive a completion certificate from the Center. Trainer Course instructors are required to submit the course roster to the Center via its online roster submission form (visit www.LNT.org). Successful completion of the course requires participation in all course activities and teaching exercises. Those who complete the Trainer course are equipped to:

- Understand, demonstrate and teach state of the art minimum impact techniques for friends, family or community groups;
- Lead a discussion on outdoor ethics and help others explore their own personal outdoor ethic;
- Serve as a co-instructor for Leave No Trace Trainer Courses with a qualified Master Educator;
- Offer Leave No Trace Awareness Workshops.

Instructors of a Leave No Trace Trainer Course reserve the right to deny a Trainer completion certificate if in the eyes both instructors, the participant has **not**: 1) attended the entire course; 2) displayed the skills necessary to conduct outreach programs or otherwise disseminate Leave No Trace skills and ethics in a productive way; or 3) exhibited behavior consistent with the Leave No Trace philosophy. Should a course participant display or engage in any of the aforementioned, adequate documentation is required by the course instructors, and should be forwarded to the Center upon course completion.

E. LEAVE NO TRACE AWARENESS WORKSHOPS

1. Curriculum Content

A Leave No Trace Awareness Workshop is any formal Leave No Trace presentation that is one-day or shorter, and facilitated or implemented by a Leave No Trace Master Educator, Leave No Trace Trainer or other individual familiar with Leave No Trace. These workshops require less time, and are less comprehensive and less expensive to conduct than a Master Educator or Trainer Course. Like Master Educator and Trainer Courses, Awareness Workshops emphasize skills and techniques essential to Leave No Trace minimum impact outdoor ethics and education. **However, Leave No Trace courses, including Awareness Workshops, do not teach basic travel, camping or other outdoor skills, nor do they provide outdoor instructor certification.** Samples of Awareness Workshop curriculums are available through the Center.

Although not required, it is encouraged to have the Center review, time permitting, any written materials developed for such Awareness Workshops. Any materials submitted for review should be sent to the Education Department at the Center. Awareness Workshop materials are available from the Center: www.LNT.org

2. Core Components for Awareness Workshop Curriculum

Leave No Trace Awareness Workshops should be one-day or less in length, and should adequately cover the Seven Leave No Trace Principles, outdoor ethics, and mission of the Center for Outdoor Ethics. Awareness Workshops can be built into other course offerings, classes, staff trainings, etc. as appropriate.

In addition, the following topics should be included, time-permitting:

- Overview of the national Leave No Trace program, including information pertaining to Leave No Trace Frontcountry practices when applicable.
- The role and function of Leave No Trace Master Educators and Leave No Trace Trainers.
- The role and function of the Center for Outdoor Ethics.
- Overview of the Leave No Trace website and all available resources.
- Overview of how individuals and organizations can join and support Leave No Trace.

3. Awareness Workshop: Leaders

The leader for an Awareness Workshop can be a Leave No Trace Master Educator, a Leave No Trace Trainer or other individual familiar with Leave No Trace. Leave No Trace Awareness Workshop leaders should have training and experience in outdoor leadership/instruction skills. It is recommended that workshop leaders maintain current certification in basic first-aid and CPR.

4. Awareness Workshop: Enrollment

Awareness Workshop enrollment is not limited by the Center, but organizations and individuals offering Awareness Workshops should strive to keep the instructor to student ratio low in order to enhance learning opportunities. The number of participants on any awareness workshop should be in compliance with local land management agency stated group size limits.

5. Awareness Workshop: Cost

Course costs for Awareness Workshops are not set by the Center. Course leaders and/or organizations should set the cost of Awareness Workshops to cover material, travel, staff and other costs, and are encouraged to offer free Awareness Workshops whenever possible. Additionally, if fees are charged, the Center encourages course leaders an/or

organizations to make Awareness Workshop fees as low as possible to encourage enrollment and training efforts.

6. Awareness Workshop: Completion

Upon successful completion of a Leave No Trace Awareness Workshop, each participant is eligible to receive a completion certificate from the instructor (available from www.LNT.org). Those who complete a Leave No Trace Awareness Workshop should be equipped to:

- Understand, promote and share minimum impact techniques with friends, family or community groups;
- Lead a discussion on outdoor ethics and help others explore their own personal outdoor ethic;
- Understand and explain why Leave No Trace is important in all areas;
- Understand and convey the purpose and mission of Leave No Trace;
- Recite and explain the seven principles of Leave No Trace;
- Understand the role and function of Leave No Trace Master Educators and Leave No Trace Trainers.

Upon completion of an Awareness Workshop, the instructor is asked to submit an Awareness Workshop report including total number of participants, participant affiliation information, contact information (including names, address, phone and e-mail) and workshop evaluation data to the Center within 30 days of workshop completion. Awareness Workshops can be reported online: www.LNT.org

F. LEAVE NO TRACE OUTREACH

Leave No Trace Master Educators, Leave No Trace Trainers and others are encouraged to conduct various forms of Leave No Trace outreach, such as seminars, ranger talks and short presentations. Content may vary but at a minimum should include a discussion of the principles of Leave No Trace, a discussion regarding why Leave No Trace is needed and a Leave No Trace program overview. Course duration may also vary. The use of materials and training aids from the Center is recommended. Experiential-based training, in an outdoor setting is also strongly encouraged. Anyone conducting Leave No Trace outreach in the field is encouraged to have a minimum of current certification in basic first-aid and CPR.