



Leave No Trace Guidelines for Responsible Recreation in Restoration Areas

This Leave No Trace information is designed to provide guidance for recreating in areas that are undergoing restoration efforts. Climate change, catastrophic wildfire, bark beetle infestation, invasive species, record droughts, and other stressors threaten the health of our forest and watersheds, and the people that rely on them. As areas affected by such stressors undergo natural or agency-led restoration efforts, following the recommendations below can help protect you and the land.

Plan Ahead and Prepare

Planning

- Ensure that the area you intend to visit is open to public access.
- Know the restoration area and learn about specially protected or closed sites.
- Plan your trip so as to minimize your impact. Avoid times of high use and stay within group size limits.

Estimating Risk

- Restoration landscapes, such as those affected by wildfire or other natural events, are highly reactive to weather. Seasonal risks are often increased in restoration landscapes and events can quickly escape your control.
- The risk of hazard trees, rockslides, landslides, and flash floods are often elevated in restoration areas.
- Rescue can be more difficult in a restoration landscape: sign-up to receive emergency weather updates.
- Expect that maps may differ from the trails and amenities you encounter. Familiar routes may have changed, and facilities may have been destroyed (e.g. a washed-out trail bridge). Prepare for wayfinding in a landscape with few or changed distinguishing features.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Traveling

- Restoration landscapes may seem wide open or even blank, but appearances are deceiving: be situationally aware. Established trails typically provide the safest route of travel.
- Ground may appear solid, but may not be; natural and human-made materials may be unstable and should be left in place.
- Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy. Take care to avoid dead standing or fallen trees which are hazardous.
- Know that your downhill traveling impact may be magnified in a restoration landscape. Erosion starts small but grows quickly.
- Stay on designated roads and park in designated/established parking areas to minimize erosion.

Camping

- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from any water source. Flood risk may be increased in a restoration landscape. Use established campsites if they are open for public use.
- Learn if water sources are contaminated and take precautions to avoid drinking or using chemically polluted water.
- Campsites should be located away from hazardous trees and steep hillsides. Strong winds that may uproot or blow down trees, landslides, and mud flows are potential risks in a restoration landscape.

Dispose of Waste Properly

- Waste may decompose slowly in restoration landscapes. Pack it in, pack it out. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

- Objects tell the story of degradation and restoration. Leave natural and human-made objects as you find them.
- Invasive species often thrive in restoration landscapes. Avoid introducing or transporting weed seeds by cleaning your boots and gear before entering the area.

- Restoration efforts are not always obvious, but you should never take restoration into your own hands. Ask the land manager how you can help.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Restoration landscapes, such as those impacted by wildfire are not immune to further damage. Just because an area has burned once doesn't mean it can't be burned again.
- Observe fire regulations and take care to contain and fully extinguish all fires.

Respect Wildlife

- Wildlife behavior in restoration landscapes may be more unpredictable. You can easily stress both animal and plant life whose landscape has already been disrupted.
- Observe wildlife from a distance. Never feed animals. Store food and trash securely. Leash pets at all times or consider leaving them at home.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Restoration efforts renew natural landscapes and human communities. Respect the residents and visitors for whom restoration is important: what may appear damaged to you is still a vital resource to others.
- If you encounter agency personnel working on restoration projects, please follow any specific direction or instructions they may provide to protect their work and your safety.
- Use all your senses to understand the process of restoration.

For more information on Leave No Trace, visit www.LNT.org or call 1.800.332.4100