LEAVE NO TRACE
GOLD STANDARD
OUTFITTER & GUIDE

LEAVE NO TRACE ASSESSMENT
outfitter & guide

Criteria	0	1	2	3	4
Staff (x2)	No staff have received Leave No Trace training	At least one full-time staff member has completed a Leave No Trace training at any level	Multiple staff members have completed any level of Leave No Trace training	Multiple staff have completed any level of Leave No Trace training AND at least 1 staff member is a certified Leave No Trace Level 1 or Level 2 Instructor	Multiple staff have completed any level of Leave No Trace training AND at least 2 staff members are certified Leave No Trace Level 1 or Level 2 Instructors
Training Opportunities	No Leave No Trace training is offered to staff	Organization encourages staff to take the 101 Course or other Leave No Trace training	Organization facilitates or makes available Leave No Trace training for staff onboarding	Organization facilitates or makes available Leave No Trace training for staff annually	Organization facilitates or makes available Leave No Trace training for staff during onboarding and annually
Practices	No internal guidance related to best Leave No Trace practices	Staff and clients encouraged to be minimally impactful, but no guidance on best practices are provided	Guidance on Leave No Trace sometimes in place and followed by staff and youth, but is not locally tailored	Guidance on Leave No Trace sometimes in place and followed by staff and clients that is aligned with local best practices	Guidance on Leave No Trace consistently in place and followed by staff and clients that is aligned with local best practices
Pre-Trip Information	No pre-trip information related to Leave No Trace	Minimum impact information included in pre-trip materials	Pre-trip materials sometimes include Leave No Trace information, but it is not locally tailored	Pre-trip materials sometimes include Leave No Trace information that is locally tailored	Pre-trip materials consistently include Leave No Trace information that is locally tailored
During Trip Education	No education related to Leave No Trace offered during trip	Minimum impact education included during trip	Trips sometimes include Leave No Trace education, but it is not locally tailored	Trips sometimes include Leave No Trace education that is locally tailored	Trips consistently include Leave No Trace education that is locally tailored
Partnership with Land & Water Managers	Organization does not interface with land and water managers	Organization rarely interfaces land and water management agencies where trips are held	Organization sometimes interfaces with land and water management agencies where trips are held	Organization consistently interfaces with land and water management agencies where trips are held	Organization consistently interfaces with land and water management agencies where trips are held, and provides some level of support
Additional Sustainability Measures	Organization does not currently incorporate sustainability measures	Organization incorporates at least one sustainability practice such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.	Organization incorporates at least two sustainability practices such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.	Organization incorporates at least three sustainability practices such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.	Organization incorporates at least four sustainability practices such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.

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LEAVE NO TRACE ASSESSMENT

About the Assessment

This instrument is designed for outfitters and guides that wish to assess how they are implementing Leave No Trace, at what level it is being implemented, and to identify opportunities for increasing or improving specific aspects of their Leave No Trace efforts. It can be utilized to track progress over time.

This assessment is also utilized as a foundation for Leave No Trace Gold Standard designation. Organizations that score **20** and above on the assessment and meet the minimum score requirement for certain sections are eligible to apply for Gold Standard designation. Please contact Leave No Trace directly to work through this process.

Using the Assessment

To use this assessment, go through each section and determine which scoring level best describes your organization's current efforts. The Staff section scoring is weighted double (x2) because this section is so critical in allowing for implementation elsewhere.

The following provides specific information about each section of the Leave No Trace Assessment and examples for each criteria. Please review the information before proceeding with the assessment, as it will help ensure an understanding of each of the assessment criteria.

CRITERIA 1-2: STAFF & TRAINING

Criteria	0	1	2	3	4
Staff (x2)	No staff have received Leave No Trace training	At least one full-time staff member has completed a Leave No Trace training at any level	Multiple staff members have completed any level of Leave No Trace training	Multiple staff have completed any level of Leave No Trace training AND at least 1 staff member is a certified Leave No Trace Level 1 or Level 2 Instructor	Multiple staff have completed any level of Leave No Trace training AND at least 2 staff members are certified Leave No Trace Level 1 or Level 2 Instructors
Training Opportunities	No Leave No Trace training is offered to staff	Organization encourages staff to take the 101 Course or other Leave No Trace training	Organization facilitates or makes available Leave No Trace training for staff onboarding	Organization facilitates or makes available Leave No Trace training for staff annually	Organization facilitates or makes available Leave No Trace training for staff during onboarding and annually

The presence of Leave No Trace training is an important factor in implementation. It is critical to have a foundational knowledge of Leave No Trace from which to build all other aspects. This includes having staff that are trained in Leave No Trace, as well as having regular opportunities available for staff to participate in formal Leave No Trace training. This section examines the number of staff who have completed Leave No Trace training at various levels. It also looks at the type and frequency of Leave No Trace training opportunities available to staff.

Regular and consistent training is important to keep current on changes and updates and keep the information front of mind.

In order to achieve Gold Standard designation, the organization must score at least one 3 or above in this section. Because staff training is so critical to all aspects of Leave No Trace implementation, the score for this criteria is weighted x2.

1

Staff: At least 1 full-time staff member has received Leave No Trace training at any level. This could be from an online Leave No Trace course, a Subaru/Leave No Trace Team workshop, a workshop by other staff or partners, etc.

Training Opportunities: Staff are encouraged to learn Leave No Trace, but no trainings are facilitated or made available.

2

Staff: Multiple staff members have received Leave No Trace training at any level.

Training Opportunities: Leave No Trace training at any level is made available as part of onboarding for staff. This could be through providing time for training, funding for training, or facilitating the training internally or through partners.

3

Staff: Multiple staff have received Leave No Trace training at any level AND 1 staff member is a certified Level 1 or Level 2 Instructor. The certification must be current.

Training Opportunities: Leave No Trace training is made available annually for staff.

4

Staff: Multiple staff have received Leave No Trace training at any level AND 2 staff members are certified Level 1 or Level 2 Instructors. The certification must be current.

Training Opportunities: Leave No Trace training is made available annually and during onboarding for staff.

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CRITERIA 3: PRACTICES

Criteria	0	1	2	3	4
Practices	No internal guidance related to best Leave No Trace practices	Staff and clients encouraged to be minimally impactful, but no guidance on best practices are provided	Guidance on Leave No Trace sometimes in place and followed by staff and youth, but is not locally tailored	Guidance on Leave No Trace sometimes in place and followed by staff and clients that is aligned with local best practices	Guidance on Leave No Trace consistently in place and followed by staff and clients that is aligned with local best practices

Modeling Leave No Trace practices during trips is a critical way to not only minimize the impact of your trips, but to educate visitors. For many visitors, the skills and practices learned on guided trips are the skills and practices they will replicate when visiting outdoor areas independently.

This section of the assessment examines if guidance around Leave No Trace best practices for trips are provided for both staff and clients. This could include protocols and process for disposing of waste, storing food, setting up camp, adjusting for weather, etc. If there are certain materials needed to implement these practices, such as WAG bags or bear canisters, these should be provided.

Having organization wide policies around Leave No Trace ensures best practices are utilized by all staff and demonstrates that practicing Leave No Trace is highly valued by the organization.

1

Staff and clients are encouraged to be minimally impactful, but there is no guidance or protocols on how this applies to trips.

Without proper guidance and protocols in place, impacts can easily occur when people are uniformed, misinformed, or do not have the required materials to follow best practices.

2

There may be some guidance, protocols, or processes in place pertaining to Leave No Trace, but they are not specific to local best practices.

For example, the organization has general guidance on how to dispose of human waste, but not specific guidance on how to dispose of human waste based on the local best practices.

3

There is some guidance, protocols, or processes in place pertaining to Leave No Trace that are in line with local best practices, but they are not consistently followed or implemented across all trips or trip leaders.

4

There are guidance, protocols, or processes in place pertaining to Leave No Trace that are in line with local best practices, and they are not consistently implemented across all trips and trip leaders.

CRITERIA 4-5: PRE & DURING TRIP

Criteria	0	1	2	3	4
Pre-Trip Information	No pre-trip information related to Leave No Trace	Minimum impact information included in pre-trip materials	Pre-trip materials sometimes include Leave No Trace information, but it is not locally tailored	Pre-trip materials sometimes include Leave No Trace information that is locally tailored	Pre-trip materials consistently include Leave No Trace information that is locally tailored
During Trip Education	No education related to Leave No Trace offered during trip	Minimum impact education included during trip	Trips sometimes include Leave No Trace education, but it is not locally tailored	Trips sometimes include Leave No Trace education that is locally tailored	Trips consistently include Leave No Trace education that is locally tailored

Outfitting and guiding creates a unique opportunity for education. Providing clients with information around the existence of Leave No Trace and how to practice it will enhance their trip and set them up for success in the future.

This section examines the information that is provided before and during a trip and how Leave No Trace is incorporated. Pre-trip information could include confirmation emails, websites, packing lists, etc. During the trip, information could be shared by the guide or presented through educational materials provided to clients. This information may include information about local wildlife, and best practices for the specific area or activity, etc, and is most effective when provided both before and during the trip.

In order to achieve Gold Standard designation, the organization must score at least one 3 or above in this section.

1

The information provided is minimum impact but not Leave No Trace. As an example, clients are told to "Pack It In, Pack It Out," but not about Leave No Trace or the 7 Principles.

Part of the effectiveness of the Leave No Trace message is consistency. Clients see similar messages and concepts at various parks and protected areas around the country and even the world. We encourage using Leave No Trace specifically to tap into this broader message.

2

The information or educational message sometimes include Leave No Trace, but it is not locally tailored. As an example, clients are told to practice Leave No Trace, but not how or why it is relevant to the specific local area, activity, or ecosystem.

It is always best to tailor the message to the local area or specific activity. This makes the information relevant to the client and enhances their experience.

3

The information includes Leave No Trace and how it applies to the local area, specific activity, or ecosystem, but it is not consistently provided before or during the majority trips.

As an example, guides discuss Leave No Trace practices for the ecosystem on some, but not most, trips.

4

The information includes Leave No Trace and how it applies to the local area, specific activity, or ecosystem, and it is consistently provided before or during the majority of trips.

As an example, guides discuss Leave No Trace practices for the ecosystem on the majority of trips.

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CRITERIA 6: PARTNERSHIPS

Criteria	0	1	2	3	4
Partnership with Land & Water Managers	Organization does not interface with land and water managers	Organization rarely interfaces land and water management agencies where trips are held	Organization sometimes interfaces with land and water management agencies where trips are held	Organization consistently interfaces with land and water management agencies where trips are held	Organization consistently interfaces with land and water management agencies where trips are held, and provides some level of support

The public lands that visitors come to enjoy require all our effort to protect and preserve. A community wide approach is the best way to ensure continued preservation of our outdoor areas.

The assessment looks at how the organization interfaces with land and water managers for parks and protected areas where trips are held. This could be in the form of regular communication, attending events or listening sessions, or providing support through volunteering, donations of funds or resources, conditions reporting, or other assistance.

We encourage consistent interfacing between outfitters and guides and land and water managers to ensure everyone is one the same page about potential impacts, seasonal changes, best practices, regulations, etc.

1

The organization rarely interfaces with the land and water management agencies where trips are held. This refers to communications only on an as needed basis. For example, the organization only communicates with the agencies when a special use permit needs to be reauthorized.

2

The organization sometimes interfaces with the land and water management agencies where trips are held. This could mean communicating with the land and water managers annually or on a semi regular basis.

Interfacing could refer to direct communications or attending listening sessions, trainings, or other events put on by the local land and water manages.

3

The organization consistently interfaces with the land and water management agencies where trips are held. This could mean communicating with the land and water managers multiple times a year or on a regular basis.

This communication keeps the organization appraised of concerning impacts, changes to regulations or practices, or other important updates.

4

The organization consistently interfaces with the land and water management agencies where trips are held AND provides support in the form of volunteer time, donations of funds or resources, conditions reporting, or other assistance.

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CRITERIA 7: SUSTAINABILITY

Criteria	0	1	2	3	4
Additional Sustainability Measures	Organization does not currently incorporate sustainability measures	Organization incorporates at least one sustainability practice such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.	Organization incorporates at least two sustainability practices such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.	Organization incorporates at least three sustainability practices such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.	Organization incorporates at least four sustainability practices such as: recycling or composting, single-use plastic mitigation for trip meals, renewable energy use, etc.

While Leave No Trace focuses on outdoor recreation, other sustainable and planet-friendly practices are important components of protecting and preserving our natural world. This criteria examines any additional sustainability measures that might be in place at the organization.

These include the practices listed on the assessment, but if your organization is incorporating planet-friendly practices that are not listed, please still include them in your assessment, as this is not an exhaustive list.

We recognize that these practices are not accessible to all sites, and there may be barriers related to cost, infrastructure, or other resources that make a practice out of reach. The assessment is designed for an organization to still achieve designation without needing to incorporate these additional practices, but we encourage it where feasible.

1

The organization has implemented at least one sustainability measure. This could include recycling or composting for clients, renewable energy use in trip logistics, single-use plastic mitigation in trip meals, etc.

2

The organization has implemented at least two sustainability measures. This could include recycling or composting for clients, renewable energy use in trip logistics, single-use plastic mitigation in trip meals, etc.

3

The organization has implemented at least three sustainability measures. This could include recycling or composting for clients, renewable energy use in trip logistics, single-use plastic mitigation in trip meals, etc.

4

The organization has implemented at least four sustainability measures. This could include recycling or composting for clients, renewable energy use in trip logistics, single-use plastic mitigation in trip meals, etc.