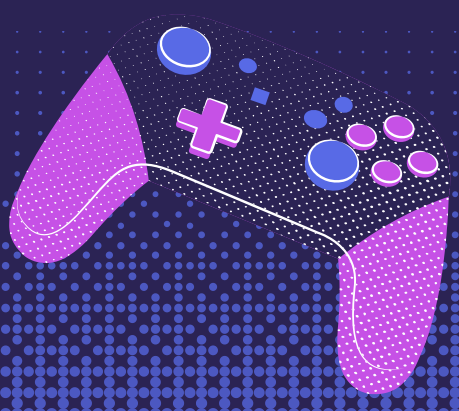
Scouting America
Natural State Council

READY PLAYER SCOUT

NOVEMBER 21-24
Reynolds Scout Training Center
Damascus, AR

WINTER CAMP 2026

LEADER'S GUIDE



ARE YOU READY TO LEVEL UP?



WELCOME TO WINTER CAMP: READY PLAYER SCOUT

Dear Scouts and Scouters,

We're thrilled to welcome you to this year's epic winter adventure: Ready Player Scout! This one-of-a-kind camping experience is where the spirit of Scouting meets the excitement of a video game world brought to life.

This year, Scouts will enter a fully immersive quest, leveling up skills, unlocking achievements, and completing challenges across a digital frontier. From teamwork challenges to engaging merit badge sessions, every moment is designed to help Scouts grow, explore, and have fun.

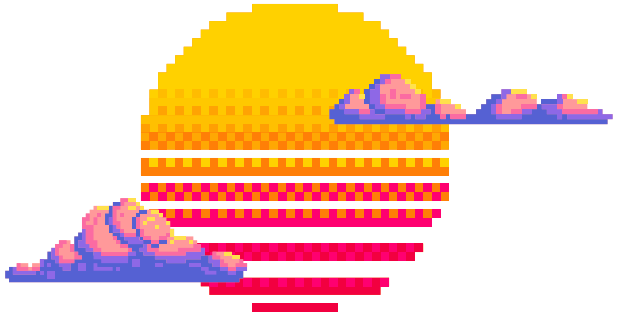
This Leader's Guide is your ultimate walkthrough! Inside, you'll find everything needed to prepare for camp, including registration details, class schedules, merit badge offerings, camp policies, and more. Keep your eyes on the screen: more surprises, bonus content, and program upgrades are on the way! Our dedicated camp staff is ready to press "start" on an unforgettable experience, ensuring every Scout enjoys a safe, exciting, and meaningful adventure while living out the mission of Scouting America.

We can't wait to see you at Winter Camp as we begin this high-energy journey through Ready Player Scout! Get ready to explore, compete, collaborate, and level up like never before.

We'll see you at camp!



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NATURAL STATE COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

CAMP INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE

For help registering for Winter Camp, contact Kim Brainard at 501-664-4780. For questions regarding program operations or administrative logistics, contact the camp leadership below.

WINTER CAMP DIRECTOR

Cahill Richardson - cahill_richardson@yahoo.com

WINTER CAMP PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Brandy Foreman - brandy.autum@gmail.com

WINTER CAMP COMMISSIONER

Herb Haile - herbhaile@gmail.com

COUNCIL CAMPING DIRECTOR

Haley Hunt - haley.hunt@scouting.org

WINTER CAMP GENERAL INFORMATION

WINTER CAMP 2026 SESSION DATES

Winter Camp 2025 will run for one session November 21-24, 2026.

CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT TIMES

- Check-in will be from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Saturday, November 21st.
- Check-out will begin at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, November 24th.

Any unit that needs to request a different arrival or departure time should contact the Camp Director.

CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

As units check in they will meet with their troop guide who will guide them through the check-in process. Units should be sure to have all of the required documentation for check-in. The check-in procedure includes the following:

- Health forms: Parts A and B needed
- Paperwork check: forms checked and outstanding payments collected
- Camp orientation and tour

NOTE: The check-in process may be changed subject to inclement weather.

RESERVATION DEPOSITS

Campsites assignment is based on when an initial payment is received. No deposit is required for winter camp. To reserve a campsite, at least one youth must be paid for at 100%. If a unit is bringing less participants than the capacity of the campsite requested, they may be assigned to share a campsite with another unit. Provisional campers do not need to request a campsite.

ONLINE REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

All winter camp registrations and payments will be made using our CouncilWare online registration system. Please be sure when registering that:

1. The shirt size is correct.
2. The rank is correct.
3. You have selected classes for all youth in *ALL* sessions.
4. All changes are checked out in the cart.
5. You are *PAID IN FULL* before coming to camp.

WINTER CAMP GENERAL INFORMATION

NATURAL STATE COUNCIL REFUND POLICY

- Requests for refunds for participant cancellations will be considered only for the following reasons:
  - Serious illness or injury
  - Death in the family
- *Refund requests must be received no later than one day after the event is completed.* Supporting documentation must accompany the request, and approved refunds will be reimbursed at 80% of fees.
- Requests must be made in writing to the Natural State Council Service Center via mail, fax, or email. All emails must be sent to NaturalStateBSA@scouting.org.
- Requests for refunds for participant cancellations will be calculated as follows:
  - Up to one day after the event = 25% refund
  - Six or more days after the event = No refund
- Activities or events cancelled by the council will be refunded at 100%.
- No refunds will be approved for no shows or for bad weather that does not warrant event cancellation.
- Required deposits are non-refundable.
- Refunds will be made by check payable to the person or entity who made the original payment. Please allow 30 days for processing.
- Units may request that their refund be held as a credit in their unit deposit account.
- Transferring fees from one person to another within the same unit for the same program is permissible. Fees are not transferrable from one Tentaroo account to another.
- The Natural State Council is not responsible for any payment arrangements made between units and their members.

WINTER CAMP 2026 FEE SCHEDULE

Category	Early (until 9/20)	Base (until 10/20)	Late (closes 11/10)
Youth	$240	$260	$280
Adult	$150	$150	$150

- Camp fees include a patch.
- The LAST DAY to register and guarantee a shirt is 10/30.
- To sign up for classes, 100% of camp fees must be paid.
- Some merit badge classes have additional fees to cover the cost of supplies and are noted in the merit badge list.

WINTER CAMP GENERAL INFORMATION

PROVISIONAL CAMPERS

The provisional camper program allows Scouts to attend camp without their unit. A provisional camper becomes part of the Winter Camp provisional troop for the duration of the camp and is supervised by volunteer Scoutmasters. Provisional troops are limited to 40 Scouts, and availability is first come, first serve.

LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES

Scouting America requires that all leaders attending camp overnight be registered leaders with Safeguarding Youth training completed. Each unit must provide at least two adult leaders with current training. To verify Safeguarding Youth training certificates upon check-in, please bring a copy of your membership card or certificate of training.

ROTATING & PART-TIME LEADERS

Consistent leadership throughout camp is necessary for safety and for the program to run smoothly. When necessary, leaders may rotate in and out and share a single leader fee. We ask that rotating leadership sign in and out of the camp office when a leadership change occurs and that the camp wristband be passed to the incoming leader. Please be aware that extra camp patches and leader recognition items will not be available for multiple leaders sharing the same leader slot.

WINTER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

Money should never be a barrier to Scouting, and we have scholarship funds available for Scouts in need. Please complete the scholarship application here for any Scouts that may need assistance in affording to attend winter camp: https://www.naturalstatecouncil.org/winter-camp-scholarship-application/

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

From US-65 turn west onto AR-124. In 2.2 miles, turn right onto Spires Road followed by a right turn in 0.5 miles onto Hall Hendren Lane. The Reynolds Training Center will be on your left in 1.1 miles. A GPS will best find the facility at this address: 1500 Hall Hendren Ln, Damascus, AR.



PREPARING FOR CAMP

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR CHECK-IN

- A unit roster of Winter Camp participants (youth and adult).
  - We recommend printing your Recharter roster and highlighting participants to ensure that all attending are registered in the unit.
- Any outstanding payments.
- For each youth and adult leader:
  - Annual Health and Medical Record, Parts A & B signed by a guardian and dated within 12 months.
  - Medication dosing form for each participant bringing prescription medication.
  - Any program-specific permission forms.

PACKING LIST - PERSONAL ITEMS

- A personal tent (REQUIRED)
- Bed roll/sleeping bag
- Pillow and blanket
- Field/Class A uniform
- Closed toe shoes
- Water shoes & swim gear (required for polar plunge)
- Scout shorts and t-shirts
- Cold weather gear
- Underwear and socks
- Rain jacket/poncho
- Mosquito netting
- Toiletries (toothbrush, soap, etc.)
- Lip balm and lotion
- Small first aid kit
- Flashlight and batteries
- Towels
- Insect repellant (non-aerosol only)
- Hat and sunglasses
- Small backpack/day pack
- Water bottle (REQUIRED)
- Pencil, paper, folder, merit badge books
- Camp chair
- Supplies needed for merit badges
- Pocket knife and Totin' Chip
- Compass
- Firem'n Chit
- Tent fan (battery operated)

TROOP ITEMS

- First aid kit
- U.S. flag
- Troop and Patrol flags
- Tools and supplies
- Water cooler
- Office supplies
- Games and campsite activities
- Fire starter
- Flashlights/camp lighting

HEALTH & SAFETY

THE HEALTH LODGE

The health lodge is staffed 24 hours a day by a qualified health officer who is equipped to handle all minor injuries. Any participant requiring care outside the scope of the health lodge will be referred to urgent care or to the emergency room of the local hospital. For insurance purposes and for the health and safety of all participants, all accidents and illnesses must be reported to the health lodge and be documented.

ANNUAL HEALTH & MEDICAL RECORD

Units must bring their complete Annual Health and Medical Records for each participant. The records must be dated within the last 12 months.

We CANNOT make exceptions to the health form requirements. If a participant does not have the correct and complete health forms they will not be permitted to check into camp.

Important reminders about health forms:

- Parts A and B will be collected at check-in.
- It is the responsibility of EACH parent/guardian to ensure that their Scout has the correct health forms.
- There is no file of health forms at camp or at the council office from previous activities; a new form must be brought to camp with the unit or Scout.
- The Annual Health and Medical Record is located under the resources section of the winter camp page. The updated form is the ONLY form allowed; sports and school physicals will not be accepted.
- All information in parts A and B should be filled out completely with the correct emergency contact information.
- Please only send COPIES of health forms to camp.
- Do not mail, email, or bring health forms to the council office prior to camp. All health forms must be printed and brought to camp.
- We ask that health forms be accurate, complete, and neatly organized.
- Health forms that note prescription medications or health issues should be separated out to be reviewed at the medical station.

HEALTH & SAFETY

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Unit leadership are responsible for providing transportation for unit member(s) requiring attention from a doctor or hospital, unless the health officer determines that emergency transport is necessary. One adult leader from the unit, and one additional adult leader, will accompany the unit member(s) requiring services and is asked to carry insurance forms in for paperwork completion. A unit leader must obtain the member(s) health forms from the health lodge before transporting to medical services.

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately by the camp director if there is any serious illness or injury. If parents/guardians are not home while the Scout is at camp, they should leave instructions on how to be contacted. The camp health officer must clear all cases requiring outside medical care before returning to camp activities.

The following medical facilities are the designated camp providers:
Baptist Health Medical Center, 1555 Exchange Ave, Conway, AR

ACCIDENT & SICKNESS INSURANCE

Each participant should have a copy of their health insurance card attached to their health form. The Scouting America Council Accident and Sickness Insurance Plan provides secondary coverage for registered Scouts. The Natural State Council provides insurance for all units registered in the council.

MEDICATIONS

Prior to arriving at camp, units should fill out one medication dosing form for each unit member taking medication. Each unit should be prepared to show these forms at check-in to the health officer and keep the health officer updated throughout the week of camp.

Prescription medication should be in the original container. Any over the counter medications brought with participants should be labeled clearly and listed on health forms. Any medications that can be dispense should be listed. Aspirin will not be given to participants under 18 years old unless there is a risk of stroke or heart attack per medical dispatch.

All medication will be dispensed in the unit area by a responsible adult leader. Medication should be kept in a locked box issued by the camp. Medication requiring refrigeration or injection may be kept in the health lodge. This medication may be dispensed by the health officer or the unit leader. It is the responsibility of the unit leader to assure that the Scout is present at the appropriate times for medication.

Note: If the medical form indicates that a participant must have an inhaler, EpiPen, or similar medical device, the health officer must confirm that the participant has the required item(s) in their possession. If the items are not present, they must obtain them or they will be required to leave camp.

CAMP RULES & POLICIES

FOOD SERVICE & DIETARY NEEDS

Participants may sit anywhere they like during meals. If units prefer to sit together, one adult may enter the dining hall and mark the tables for the unit. For breakfast and dinner units are dismissed from the flag ceremony on the activity field to the dining hall. Lunch is first come, first served.

The dining hall serves cafeteria-style meals, utilizing the serving line to expedite service. Participants should not leave the dining hall until the entire hall is dismissed. Each troop is responsible for and expected to thoroughly clean their area after each meal. This includes throwing out trash, wiping down tables and chairs, and sweeping under and around the tables.

To prevent camp illnesses, all participants are encouraged to wash and sanitize their hands prior to each meal. Hand washing sinks and sanitizing stations are located at each entry door.

If any participant has special dietary needs, the kitchen staff will do their best to make reasonable substitutions for each meal. If the dietary needs are significant, the participant is encouraged to bring their own complete, frozen meals to be prepared. There is space for food storage of specialty items in the dining hall that can be accessed by participants.

When registering a participant it is VERY important that special dietary needs or allergens are listed and details are given about food safety.

MOBILITY NEEDS

Camp commissioners will be available to provide cart transportation to participants with special mobility needs between merit badge and activity sessions. Units should contact the camp administration prior to arrival to make arrangements. There are wheelchair accessible facilities with showers and restrooms at camp. Participants may bring their own wheelchairs or motorized chairs.

WINTER WEATHER AMENITIES

To ensure campers stay warm during their stay, the Reynolds Training Center will be open 24 hours a day throughout camp. Campers are welcome to come in at any time to warm up by the fireplace. Hot water will be available around the clock, along with cocoa packets for a cozy treat.

CAMP RULES & POLICIES

WI-FI & CELL PHONE USAGE

There is intermittent wireless coverage at Gus Blass Scout Reservation. Note: There is an increasing issue with youth and cell phone disruptions during merit badge instruction. We ask that unit leaders collect and secure cell phones in the campsite during the day. Cell phone usage is prohibited in the bathrooms.

PARENTS & VISITORS AT CAMP

Camp provides and excellent opportunity for Scouts to mature in a safe environment away from home, but we understand that parents often miss their Scouts when they are away. Parents and visitors are welcome to visit camp during normal operating hours: 8 AM - 6 PM. All visitors must sign in and out at the camp office before being permitted to join their unit or Scout on camp property. Each visitor is required to wear a security wristband.

LOST & FOUND

Prior to coming to camp, Scouts are encouraged to clearly mark all personal items with their name and troop number. Scouts are also encouraged to leave valuable, sentimental, or hard to replace items at home. A lost and found box is located in the camp office. We ask that when participants find lost items they are brought to the lost and found box.

CAMP SHIRTS & PATCHES

All participants will receive 1 camp patch with their registration. Shirts and additional patches can be ordered online. Shirts are $15-$20 and additional patches are $3. Any extra shirts, patches, and other products can be purchased from the trading post during camp while supplies last.

TRADING POST

The Winter Camp Trading Post is fully stocked and will carry uniform items, shirts, equipment, handicraft, toiletries, gift items, knives, souvenirs, drinks, snacks, and more.



CAMP SCHEDULE & MERIT BADGE INFORMATION

WINTER CAMP 2026 DAILY SCHEDULE

Time	Saturday 11/21	Sunday 11/22	Monday 11/23	Tuesday 11/24
7:30-7:45		AM Flag	AM Flag	AM Flag
7:45-8:30		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:45-10:00		Session 1	Session 1	Check Out
10:15-11:30		Session 2	Session 2	
11:45-12:30		Lunch	Lunch	
12:45-2:00		Session 3	Session 3	
2:15-3:30	Check-In 2:00-4:00	Session 4	Session 4	
3:45-5:00		Session 5	Session 5	
5:15-5:30	PM Flag	PM Flag	PM Flag	
5:30-6:30	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
7:00-9:00	Evening Program	Evening Program	Evening Program	
9:00-10:30	Campsite Time	Campsite Time	Campsite Time	
10:30	Lights Out	Lights Out	Lights Out	

WINTER CAMP 2026 THEME DAYS

- *Favorite Video Game Character* - Dress up like your favorite (Scout appropriate) video game character!
- *NPC Character Day* - Dress to blend in and become your best background character.
- *Fantasy vs. Cyberpunk* - Which group will dress to impress, those from the fantasy realm or those from the future?

WINTER CAMP 2026: SIDE QUESTS

- *Lockpick Lab:* Knot-puzzle and lash a “door opener” jig
- *Photo Hunt:* Complete a 10-shot nature or camp-life checklist
- *Geo-Dash:* Find 2 waypoints and decode a clue
- *Frontier Times:* Submit stories or photos to the winter camp daily news
- *Video Game Lock-In Tournament:* Participate in the video game tournaments while at the lock-in Monday night in the dining hall
- *Board Game Tournament:* Participate in one or several of the board game tournaments
- *STEM Challenge:* Race to complete different STEM puzzles
- *Treasure Hunt:* Follow a treasure map to find the buried treasure
- *Polar Plunge:* Participate in the Polar Plunge challenge
- *Winter Survival Skills Quiz:* Answer the most questions correctly to win
- *Night Zip:* Participate in the Night Zip activity

NOTE: All scheduled programming is subject to change and any changes will be communicated as soon as possible to participants.

CAMP SCHEDULE & MERIT BADGE INFORMATION

WINTER CAMP 2026 MENU

Saturday 11/21	Sunday 11/22	Monday 11/23	Tuesday 11/24
BREAKFAST			
	Hashbrown Casserole Scrambled Eggs Bacon Cinnamon Roll	Biscuits & Gravy Scrambled Eggs Sausage Links Diced Potato	Pancake Bites Hashbrown Patty Bacon
LUNCH			
	Chicken Fajitas Veggies & Beans Mixed Toppings Tortillas Choc. Chip Cookie	Chicken Tenders Broccoli Rice Bake Carrots Tater Tots Rice Crispy Treat	
DINNER			
Penne Pasta Meat Sauce Mixed Vegetables Breadstick Brownie Truffle	Loaded Potato Soup Chicken Noodle Soup Brussel Sprouts Breadstick Banana Pudding	Roast Turkey Stuffing Sweet Potato Casserole Dinner Roll Fruit Cobbler	

FOOD SERVICE AMENITIES

Our dining hall is equipped to provide a variety of options to meet campers' dietary preferences and needs. Breakfast service includes a variety of nutritious options to start the day right, featuring cereal and oatmeal offered daily alongside the main hot meal. Milk, juice, and coffee are available during breakfast to ensure everyone begins their morning refreshed. For lunch and dinner, a fresh and fully stocked salad bar is available with a wide selection of vegetables, toppings, and dressings. In addition to the main meal offerings, a leftover bar and a build-your-own sandwich bar will be available for those seeking alternative options. Camp leaders are encouraged to help campers explore these choices to ensure a satisfying and balanced dining experience.

NOTE: All scheduled meals are subject to change and any changes will be communicated as soon as possible to participants.

CAMP SCHEDULE & MERIT BADGE INFORMATION

PREPARATION FOR MERIT BADGES & OTHER CLASSES

Scouts should arrive at camp familiar with the subjects that they'll be studying. It is also important to be familiar with:

- Merit badge prerequisites
- Required equipment

PREREQUISITES: Some merit badges include requirements that cannot be completed at camp. Each badge listed in the camp guide specifies its prerequisites. Scouts should complete these requirements before arriving to camp.

- Prerequisite Approval Form: Found under the Resources section of the Winter Camp page. Once prerequisites are completed, the form must be signed by the Scoutmaster and brought to camp. Scouts should give the completed form to their merit badge counselor at the start of class.
- Many badges require basic first aid knowledge as a first requirement. Counselors will review this briefly, but Scouts should know basic first aid procedures before camp.
- Some badges require prior completion of another merit badge. In such cases, a Scoutmaster-signed approval form confirming completion must be submitted.
- For badges like Camping, which include overnight requirements, Scoutmaster verification is required and should be submitted via the approval form.
- Certain requirements involve "your state" or "your community." If completed at camp, Arkansas will be used as the reference state. Requirements needing local context must be done at home with the Scout's family or troop.

WINTER CAMP 2026: READY PLAYER SCOUT

Scouts who participate in this video game inspired winter camp will "level up" by completing merit badges, side quests, and gaming competitions. Each merit badge belongs to a "skill path" whose theme has been inspired by a video game. Completing a path requires earning 3 of the 12 merit badges in that path, and completing a path unlocks a perk coin. Scouts will also earn XP for side quests and gaming competitions that will go towards helping their troop earn one of the winter camp rewards.

CAMP SCHEDULE & MERIT BADGE INFORMATION

WINTER CAMP 2026 MERIT BADGE PATHS

1.Dragonborn Path: Survival, Crafting, and the Wilds

Learn to thrive outdoors and forge practical fieldcraft.

- Archery*
- Competitive Gaming
- Environmental Science
- First Aid
- Leatherwork
- Nature
- Wilderness Survival

2.Frontier Path: Marksmanship, Stock, and Survival

Frontier skills with ethical outdoor practices.

- Archery*
- Competitive Gaming
- Environmental Science
- Fish & Wildlife Management
- Leatherwork
- Nature
- Wilderness Survival

3.Wastelander Path: STEM, Systems, and Resilience

Tinker, test, and think like a problem solver.

- Competitive Gaming
- Digital Technology
- Electronics
- Emergency Preparedness
- First Aid
- Radio
- Sustainability
- Wilderness Survival

4.Wayfinder Path: Exploring, Survival, and Adventure

Wayfinding and survival skills with a treasure hunting twist.

- Astronomy
- Climbing
- Competitive Gaming
- Exploring
- Geocaching
- Wilderness Survival

5.Arcade Builder Path: Design, Media, and Story

Build worlds, tell stories, and prototype games.

- Animation
- Art
- Communication
- Competitive Gaming
- Digital Technology
- Electronics
- Game Design
- Graphic Arts
- Radio

Asterisks indicate that an activity, NOT a merit badge, will be offered.

NOTE: All scheduled programming is subject to change and any changes will be communicated as soon as possible to participants.

CAMP SCHEDULE & MERIT BADGE INFORMATION

WINTER CAMP 2026 MERIT BADGE MATRIX

Merit Badge	Limit	Cost	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
ADVENTURE							
Archery	12	$5	X			X	
Climbing	12				X		
ARTS/COMMUNICATIONS							
Art	12				X		
Communications	12		X				
Graphic Arts	12					X	
Leatherwork	12	$10					X
ECOLOGY							
Environmental Science	12				X		
Fish/Wildlife Management	12		X				
Nature	12		X				
Sustainability	12		X				
SCOUTCRAFT							
Emergency Preparedness	12				X		
Exploring	12				X		
First Aid	12				X		
Geocaching	12						X
Wilderness Survival	12				X		
S.T.E.M.							
Animation	12				X		
Astronomy	12		X				
Competitive Gaming	12		X			X	
Digital Technology	12		X				
Electronics	12				X		
Game Design	12			X			
Radio	12		X				

INFORMATION FOR LEADERS

LEADER MEETINGS

Leader meetings will be held at 9 AM Sunday and Monday morning in the dining hall. We will review upcoming activities, important updates, and answer any questions and address any concerns. We ask that at least one adult leader from each unit attend.

ZOOM MEETINGS

The camp administration will be hosting a series of Zoom meetings where leaders can learn what's in store at camp and get their questions answered. The Zoom link will be posted on the council calendar.

- Thursday, 9/24/2026, 7 PM
- Thursday, 10/29/2026, 7 PM
- Thursday, 11/12/2026, 7 PM

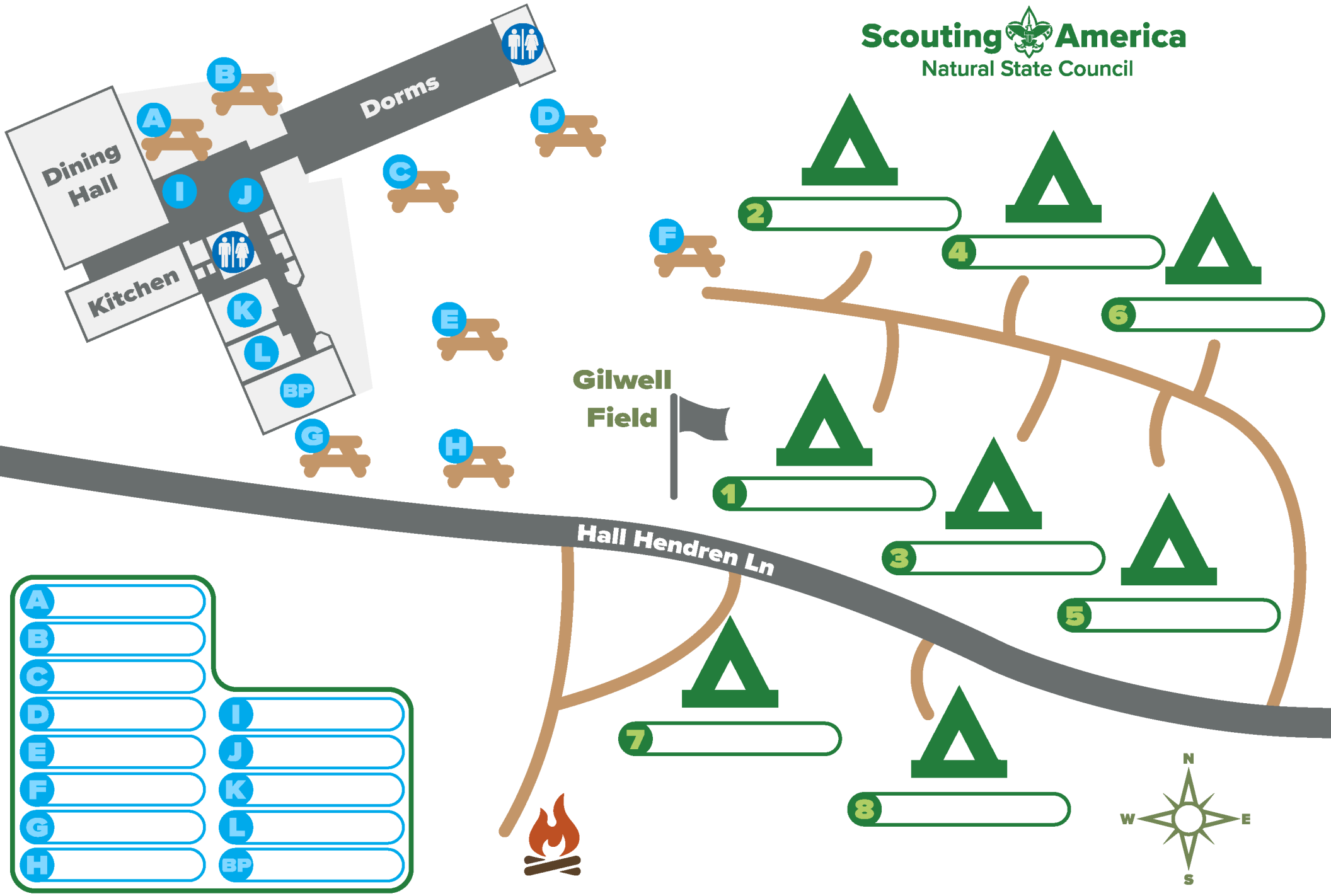
LEADER ACTIVITIES

A number of optional leader activities will be held throughout camp, coordinated by a variety of guests. These activities will be discussed during the Zoom meetings leading up to camp and will be available to sign up for upon arrival.



Reynolds Training Center

Scouting America
Natural State Council





PURPLE

