

Southwest Nordic Center
PO Box 3212
Taos, NM 87571
(575) 758-4761

Overnight What to Bring List

Skis, boots, and poles; Snowboard; Snowshoes depending upon your method of conveyance
Waxes or Maxiglide
Climbing Skins
Backpack- preferably an internal frame
Sleeping Bag- as warm as you have
Warm Hat- one that covers your ears
Mittens and/or Gloves- mittens are warmer
Wool Socks
Sock Liners- silk or polypropylene
Scarf or neck gaiter
Long Underwear- both top and bottoms
Pants or Knickers- No jeans. Wool, thinsulate, pile, or
polypropylene are fine
Shirt
Sweater
Vest
Jacket- insulated
Windshell- both top and bottom
Gaiters
Sunglasses
Sunblock
Day Pack
Map and Compass and/or GPS unit and/or altimeter
First Aid Kit
Ski Repair Kit
Avalanche transceiver
Food and water
Camera and Film
Booties or Hut Slippers
Flashlight
Toilet Paper
Toothbrush and Paste
Soap- biodegradable only
4 "AA" batteries for speaker for ipod/mp-3 players
Yurt confirmation packet

The way to dress for mountain travel in winter is to wear layers. This will enable you to stay warm without getting too hot or cold. The above list takes this into account. The list is complete as to required items and includes some personal items also. You are welcome to bring other items as you choose. Remember: Even if the weather is sunny in town or at the trailhead you should still bring plenty of warm clothes.

What is at the Taos Yurt

This list is intended to serve as a reference for what you can expect to find at the yurt. It does not represent an inventory of items but rather as assistance to guide your preparations.

Kitchen:

The yurt comes equipped with a three-burner propane cook stove. There is a propane tank at the yurt. There is not an oven at the yurt. There are pots and pans, silverware, utensils, measuring cups and spoons, water glasses, coffee cups, wine glasses, melitta coffee filters and cone, thermos, hot pads, kitchen towels, paper towels, garbage bags, dish soap, bleach, scrubbies, spices, salt and pepper.

Lighting:

The yurt comes with three propane lanterns that operate with disposable propane canisters, which are provided. A spare lantern, globe, and mantles are provided as well.

Sleeping:

The yurt is set up to accommodate up to 10 persons. The arrangement is two bunk beds with a double mattress on the lower bunk and twin mattress on the top. There are four other mattresses, which can be put on the floor when needed. There are 10 pillows/cases provided. The lower bunk folds up into a couch when not needed as a bed.

Warmth:

The yurt comes equipped with an airtight woodstove, with a glass window for ambiance. Firewood is provided. There is newspaper and matches provided as well for fire starting. There is a large rug and two throw rugs available to assist with comfort and ambience. Sleeping bags and blankets are not provided.

Toilet:

There is an outhouse for going to the bathroom. The toilet seat resides in the yurt so as to keep it warm for when needed. Toilet paper is provided.

Water:

Water is by snowmelt. There are 2 large pots, which live on the woodstove for melting snow for cooking, drinking, and doing dishes. There are other large pots for collecting snow. It is recommended that all drinking water be boiled. It is easy to cool down by putting covered pots outside.

Games:

There are some games provided at the yurt. It is attempted to have cards, cribbage, Jenga, Yahtzee, chess, checkers, backgammon, and twister. Every season is rough on the game boxes but the contents should be there. There is a small speaker provided which requires 4 "AA" batteries and plugs into ipod/mp3 players.

Table:

There is a table and chairs for eating and hanging around. The chairs are not padded.

Accessories:

There is a broom, mop and bucket, hatchet, axe, maul, snow shovel, and digging shovel. These will help with managing the snow around the yurt and keeping the yurt tidy inside.

The Southwest Nordic Center welcomes you to our yurt system. Great effort has gone into making our yurts warm and comfortable for your stay. Below are a number of items that will require your attention. Please follow the recommendations for handling of wastes so as to keep the environment safe for groups that will follow (it's worth the extra effort). Please be careful with fire at the yurts and enjoy your stay.

Taos Yurt Maintenance-

Arriving- please use the shovel and/or broom to clear any snow off the deck and stairs. Take care not to dig into the deck when chipping ice. You will want to clear a path to the outhouse, and then clear any snow from its roof. A decent path to the outhouse will make using it easier. You will also want to clear as much snow as possible from the roof of the yurt, especially over the door so as to assure its free movement. Please be careful not to tear the roof in the process.

Water- supply is by snowmelt. Snow may be collected anywhere in the vicinity of the yurt. Care should be taken to select only clean, pure snow. The snow may be melted in the large pots on the wood stove. Take care not to burn the snow when melting or there will be an off taste to the water. It is recommended to boil water to purify it.

Warmth- an airtight wood stove has been installed for your comfort. Remove excess ashes from the stove before starting a fire. A metal container is kept behind the stove for this purpose. Empty the ashes into the outhouse hole. Paper is provided and kindling may be chopped on a stump on the deck. When stoking the fire, first rake the coals to the front of the stove before adding more wood. Do not leave the stove door open during burning and whenever you leave the yurt be sure that the stove is turned down completely. The damper is opened by pulling the gold knob away from the stove. Split wood to be burned is stacked inside next to the wood stove and on a wood deck to the south of the yurt deck. It helps to dry the wood inside the yurt prior to needing it. If moisture persists then utilize smaller pieces in the stove.

Cooking- the gas cook stove uses propane. To use the gas cook stove you must first turn on the valve on the propane tank on the deck. Please do not overturn this valve! Next turn on the valve located where the hose enters the wall inside the yurt. Please close the inside valve whenever the cook stove is not in use for extended periods i.e. overnight and during the day. Turn off both valves when you finish your visit. If you encounter an unsolvable problem with the cook stove there is a back-up two burner stove in the far right cabinet compartment. This stove uses the same propane cans as the lanterns. Put a hot pad under hot pots and pans when setting them on the counter and wood surfaces.

Lighting- there are three propane lanterns provided. They use disposable canisters. Extras of these can be found to the left of the kitchen counter. Always light the match before turning on the gas when lighting the lanterns. The lantern handles get hot when the lanterns are hanging and burning, so use a hot pad when moving them. Be careful not to knock over the lanterns! A spare lantern is available in the far right kitchen cabinet compartment. A spare globe and mantles may be found there as well.

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Dishes- there are two 5-gallon stainless steel pots for melting snow to wash dishes. Cleaning is with a 3-bucket system utilizing the 3 bus tubs that are provided. Tub #1 gets soap, but very little as the cold dish soap will foam much more than expected! Tub #2 is for the first rinse. Tub #3 is for the final rinse and sanitizing as it gets a touch of bleach (1 tbl/gallon H₂O). Discard of the dishwater into the outhouse hole.

Bathroom- There is an outhouse for going to the bathroom. The toilet seat resides in the yurt so as to keep it warm for when needed. Toilet paper is provided. Spare tp is in a bin under the bunk opposite the kitchen. Please do not pee off of the deck, or in random areas around the yurt! Either use the outhouse or on the far side of the outhouse beyond the path.

Garbage- garbage bags and a trashcan are provided, but each group is expected to carry out their own garbage. Be sure to check the trashcan before you go! Leaving a clean bag in the can is fine if it is empty.

Food- plastic containers for storing food during your stay are provided, adjacent to the kitchen counter, so as to discourage rodents. Items that need to be kept cold can be stored in a separate container and stored on the floor away from the woodstove or outside (beware of freezing). These plastic containers may have spare food and yurt supplies already, but there should be plenty of room for your food. Feel free to leave left over food for later groups, however do not leave perishables as these simply rot.

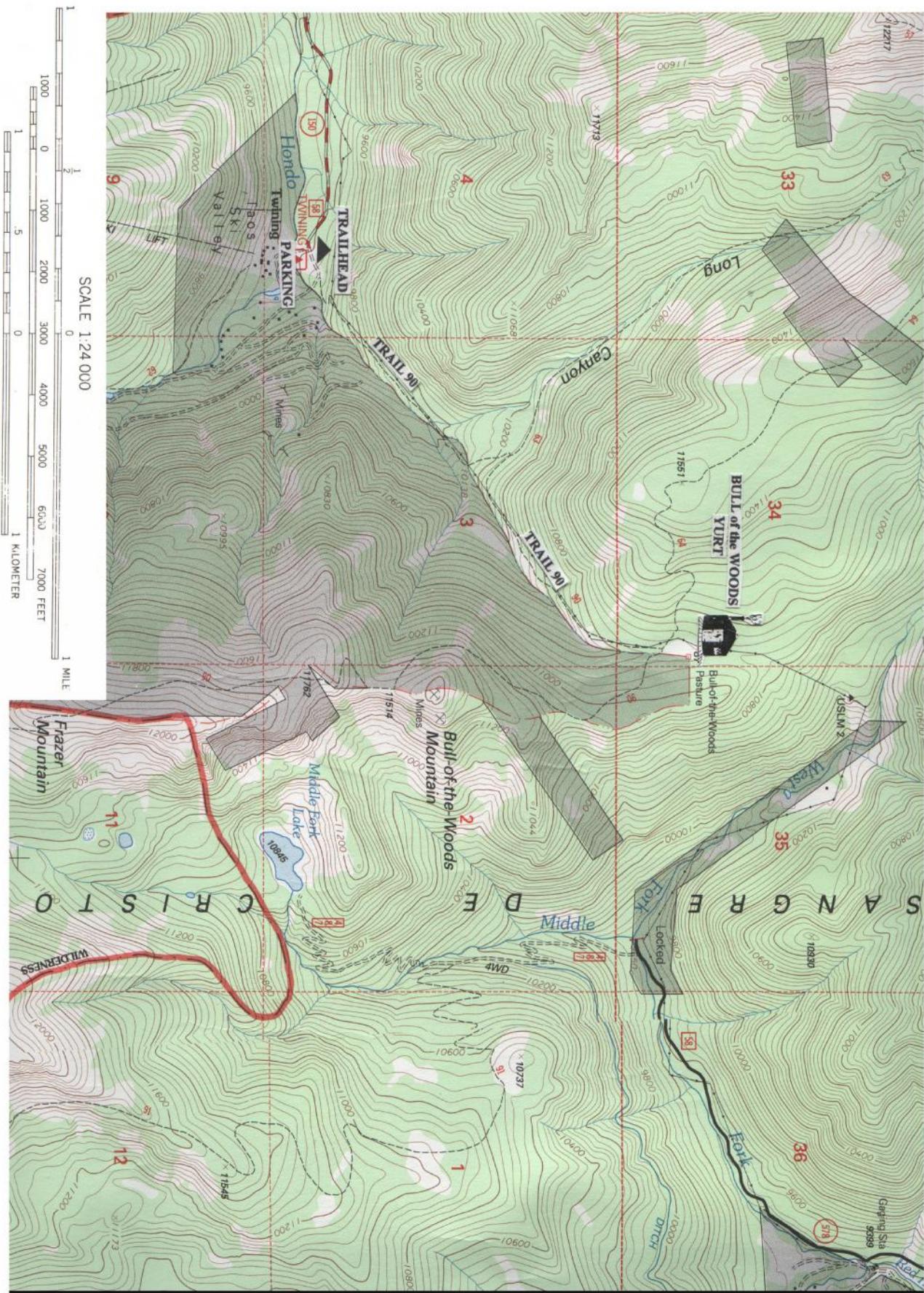
Yurt Safety- at each yurt follow the instructions printed on each appliance for safe operation. Operation manuals for the wood stove, gas cook stove, and lanterns may be found in a plastic container on the shelves to the left of the kitchen counter. Please do not set candles directly on wood surfaces. Instead put them in a container to catch dripping wax. There is a fire extinguisher attached to the end of the kitchen counter. A first aid kit and maps may be found on the shelves to the left of the kitchen counter.

Leaving- check out time is 1 PM. You may stay later if the next group has not arrived yet but the yurt should be ready for their arrival. Please leave the yurt as you found it: fresh piles of dry wood and kindling inside with the floor swept and the dishes clean.

Safety-

The yurts are in the mountain backcountry. Travel in such a remote area can be hazardous. If you are using the yurts on an unguided basis you are responsible for your own safety. Every group should be prepared for any emergency that may arise. Ski repair and first aid kits should be carried (lists available upon request). Skill with map and compass is required. Those wishing to ski steeper terrain should be aware of avalanche dangers. If you are in doubt about a slope's stability then don't ski it! In the event of an emergency call SNC at (575) 758-4761. Medical facilities are available at Taos Ski Valley at Mogul Medical or in Taos at Holy Cross Hospital. If a Search and Rescue effort is required, the procedure is to telephone the NM State Police at (575) 758-8878.

Bull of the Woods Yurt Map



Bull of the Woods Yurt-

Trailhead: The trailhead for this yurt lies at the top end of the parking for Taos Ski Valley. There is a forest service sign indicating the start of the trail.

Parking: Parking is at the top of the Taos Ski Valley parking lot. Do not park where the signs say no overnight parking. Anywhere else is okay.

Trailhead Elevation: 9300'

Trailhead GPS: N36 35.830; W105 26.262

Yurt Elevation: 10,800'

Yurt GPS: N 36 36.837; W 105 25.742

Mileage to the Yurt: 2 miles

Maps: The trail to and the yurt itself are on the Wheeler Peak 7.5 min. USGS topo map. For those of you wishing to ski out towards Gold Hill, I recommend the Red River 7.5 min. USGS topo map. I also suggest you obtain the Carson National Forest map. All of these maps are provided for your use at the yurts.

Directions to the Bull of the Woods Yurt- You follow trail 90 from the parking area to the yurt. This trail is steep and straight forward. You will want to stay on the hiker's route and not deviate along the horse trails. About 1 mile up the trail is the Long Canyon turn off. Do not take this trail. Instead continue to follow the signs for Bull of the Woods Meadow. After approximately 1.8 miles you will reach the top of the canyon and a trail intersection. One trail goes to the right towards Wheeler Peak and another goes to the left towards Gold Hill. You will take neither of these trails but rather continue straight ahead into the large open meadow. The yurt is at the northwest corner of this opening.

Winter Wildlife Awareness

As we enjoy the winter use of the Bull of the Woods Yurt, we do need to recognize that we share this environment with many species of wildlife and that there are things that people do that are detrimental to them. Of utmost concern in the Wheeler Peak-Gold Hill area are the impacts upon the bighorn Sheep. Of course we hope to minimize our negative impact upon all the wildlife as well.

Bighorn Sheep Awareness-

Bighorn sheep are native to the Wheeler Peak-Gold Hill area. However, due to poaching, habitat competition, and disease the original herd is extinct. In 1993 bighorn sheep were reintroduced into this region. The bighorn sheep winter on the above tree line, wind-blasted, grass exposed slopes of the ridgelines. This terrain offers a steady food supply and is adjacent to steep terrain to escape from would be predators. Winter represents a stressful time for the bighorn sheep population. The bighorn sheep survive off of summer fat reserves and spend much of the time grazing in an effort to compensate for the extreme low temperatures and low forage nutritive value of winter. Any energy expended by the bighorns at this time trying to escape or avoid humans, dogs, or predators could affect their survival and therefore affect the size of the spring population. Therefore, as yurters we must make every effort not to disturb these animals in their natural habitat. This effort includes:

- 1) No Dogs at the Yurt! dogs may chase after and/or scare the bighorns into fleeing thus using vital energy reserves. No exceptions.
- 2) Avoid any close contact with the bighorn sheep- give them wide-berth if you do encounter them. Don't make loud noises like yelling to your friends to come and see. Avoid standing and staring. Don't make the bighorns have to move due to your presence.
- 3) No feeding or providing salt to the bighorn sheep.

The goal is to allow yurters access to this beautiful, high alpine terrain without having a deleterious effect on the bighorn sheep.

General Wildlife Habitat Awareness-

Many wildlife species have unfortunately found human presence to be a food source. The effects of these handouts or from scavenging can be significant. These "unnatural" food sources disrupt population dynamics creating a spike in populations when the human source of food is available. After this spike comes a die-off when the human food is no longer present. This spike and die off has a ripple effect throughout the local food chain. What may seem as a simple act of feeding a Gray Jay for fun, is really an act of harm to the wildlife. The Gray Jays, also known as Canadian Jays or Camp Robbers, are very persistent at scavenging food and will be very brazen. In some areas, chipmunks and other birds have taken up these same bad habits. Deliberately feeding a jay, squirrel or chipmunk is an act of irresponsibility. Food left carelessly around the yurt can attract rodents. Food containers are provided in the yurt to keep your food safe from them. It is important to properly handle food scraps by either burning them completely in the woodstove, or bagging them up and carrying them home and discarding them. Do not toss food scraps outside the yurt. Being responsible with your food will help the wildlife.

As with the bighorn sheep many wildlife species find winter to be a time of high stress. Please do not make them utilize valuable energy reserves trying to avoid you. It is important that yurters do not have a negative impact on the local wildlife, so that all of these species can prosper in a natural manner.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please give us a call at SNC.