

OFF-SEASON NATURE CAMPS 2023



www.campbackcountry.org







Table of Contents

Camp Backcountry Overview	1
Our Facilities	2
Drop-Off and Pick-Up	3-4
Nature Camp Activities	5
Sample Schedule	6
Camp Policies & Expectations	7-8
Health & Safety	9-10
Registration & Paperwork	11
Cancellation & Refund Policy	12
Contact Information	12



Backcountry Wilderness Area

The Backcountry Wilderness Area consists of 13 square miles of land that was set aside for conservation during the development of Highlands Ranch. The Backcountry Wilderness Area provides important habitat to many different species. Elk, coyotes, black bears, golden eagles, bobcats, great horned owls, bull snakes, bluebirds, and wild turkeys are just a few of the species that call the Backcountry home. The mission of the Backcountry Wilderness Area is to improve wildlife habitat, inspire the next generation of environmental stewards, and ignite a lifelong love of the outdoors for all.

Camp Backcountry Overview

We believe that children learn, grow, and thrive best when outdoors and immersed in nature. Our week-long, full-day outdoor camps support the needs of children by using a whole-child, experiential learning approach.

Our goal is to nurture their hearts and minds while strengthening their connection to, and understanding of, the natural world. Whether campers are exploring, hiking, building forts, riding horses, creating art, playing in the woods, or cooking over the campfire, Camp Backcountry is more than just a place to spend your summer. It's an experience that becomes part of who each child is.



Our Facilities

Located at 5,920 feet in the heart of the Front Range, our 8,200-acre campus serves as the ultimate learning environment. Our Base Camp facilities include outdoor learning spaces, large shade structures, a free play area with natural playscapes, learning garden, discovery trail, and all of our barnyard friends. Just down the road from our Base Camp is our state-of-the-art Archery Range and Horse Corrals. Our Horse Corral facilities include five outdoor arenas, two round pens, shade tents with seating areas, and space for games.



Camp Backcountry
6005 Ron King Trail, Littleton, CO 80120
www.CampBackcountry.org

Drop Off & Pick Up



Drop-off and Pick-up Times

Drop-off: 9:00–9:30 a.m.



Early and Late Drop-Offs

Campers may not be dropped off at camp before 9:00 a.m. If you know you are going to be late (dropping off after 9:30 a.m.) please contact the camp office at campbackcountry@hrcaonline.org or 720-671-5958, so that we can make arrangements to get your child out to their camp group, should their group have already left Base Camp.

Late Pickup Policy

Although we enjoy spending the day with your children, please be respectful of our staff's time and pick-up your children on time every day. Be sure to take the traffic, weather, and road conditions into account when timing your arrival. No exceptions

will be made to the below policy. Campers who have not been picked up by 4:00 p.m. will be charged a \$1 per minute fee for every minute you are late.

At 4:30 p.m. the Douglas County Sheriff will be notified of any children not yet picked up if parents have not contacted the camp at 720-671-5958 regarding their late arrival.



What to Expect at Drop-off

Drop-off begins at 9:00 a.m. and runs until 9:30 a.m. Please do not arrive much before 9:00 a.m., as we will not sign in any campers until 9:00 a.m. If you need to leave your child before 9:00 a.m., you must sign up for Before Care, no exceptions.

We appreciate your patience on busy days. Please give yourself extra time at drop-off, especially on the first day of camp. When you arrive, park and then come to the check-in table and look for signage for your camper's group. Staff members will be at the check-in table to make sure your child is prepared for their time at Camp Backcountry, answer any questions you have, and check in any medications, epi-pens, or inhalers children need to have with them at camp.

Please note, you will not be able to leave your child at camp without completed paperwork, including your child's paperwork for epi-pens and inhalers. If you arrive at camp without completed paperwork, you will be required to fill out the paperwork on site before leaving.

What to Expect at Pick-up

Pick-up begins at 3:30 p.m. and runs until 4:00 p.m. All campers must be picked up by 4:00 p.m. sharp, unless pre-enrolled in After Care. When you arrive, park and then come to the check-out table and look for signage for your campers group. Staff members will be at the check-out table to answer any questions you have, talk about your campers' day, and check your child out.

Each day during pick-up you will be asked to show your photo ID. If you would like for anyone other than a parent or legal guardian to pick-up your child, you must add them to your authorized pick-up list on CampInTouch.

Off-Season Camp Activities



Opening and Closing Circle

At the chime of the Camp Backcountry bell, the entire camp community gathers together on the first day of camp for the opening ceremony. Opening ceremony is a time to learn camp songs and traditions, participate in friendly group competitions and community building activities, laugh at staff skits, and to create a sense of belonging for everyone.

Group Huddles

Each day during huddles, staff and campers meet as a small group to discuss the day ahead, participate in a name game or team-building activities, share ideas and experiences, and greet one another. Huddle time creates a sense of belonging and helps the group focus on positive relationships and expectations. The goal for huddle time is to foster the group's sense of inclusion, teamwork, and community.

Backcountry Beads

Each camper will receive a name tag necklace that they will decorate on their first day at camp, and then throughout their week(s) at Camp Backcountry, campers will earn beads to add to their necklace that represent the different activities they did and experiences they had. Campers will have the opportunity to earn beads for everything they do including completing the orienteering course, taking care of the barnyard animals, picking up litter, or by being kind. By the end of their time at Camp Backcountry, campers will be able to tell the story of their camp experience using the beads they've earned.

Unstructured Nature Play

Unstructured and immersive play in nature is a large part of what makes the camp experience so unique at Camp Backcountry. Every day campers have the opportunity to engage in true child-led outdoor play in nature. In a world where childhood is overscheduled and overmanaged, and where milestones and achievements are prioritized over curiosity and creativity, the gift of a slow, nature-filled childhood is priceless. While purposefully left unstructured, staff will still actively direct and guide campers as necessary.

Exploratory Hikes

We believe childhood should be filled with unhurried joy and discovery. Our exploratory hikes provide the opportunity for inquiry based learning focused upon each child's interests. We move at the camper's pace and stop regularly to investigate the world around us. We might look at animal tracks, break open scat to see what an animal was eating, catch grasshoppers, smell the Ponderosas, or watch baby turkeys we came across.

Hikes might range in length from half a mile to three miles in length, depending on the group's needs, interests, and weather.

Unstructured Play

We provide time for unstructured play each day. Unstructured outdoor play is shown to improve kids' motor skills, creates greater self-awareness, improves communication skills, and builds greater appreciation for nature.

Group Games

We spend some time each day playing outdoor games in the fields and forest including camouflage, capture the flag, drip-drip-drop, water dodgeball, dragon tails, tracker tag, and park ranger. Groups might combine with other groups for some games.

Seasonal Activities

Each day of off-season camp has a unique underlying theme, based upon the seasons and weather. Activities could include camp cooking, shelter building, winter animal tracking, gardening, jack o' lantern volcanoes, sledding, decorating tree slice ornaments, snow science, or drinking hot cocoa around the campfire.

Closing Ceremony

The last day of camp culminates with a closing ceremony, full of Camp Backcountry traditions and a memorable way to end the week. Closing ceremony is the essence of Camp Backcountry, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Sample Schedule



9:00–9:30 a.m. Drop off and Centers

After being checked in, campers start their day with a choice between free play, fort building, sand play, mud kitchen, chess or checkers, gaga ball, or drawing.

9:30–9:45 a.m. Group Huddles

Each morning, individual groups will participate in get to know you activities or community building activities.

9:45–10:00 a.m. Opening Ceremony (first day) or Hit the Trail (all other days)

We always take a bathroom break and fill up water bottles before hitting the trail.

10:00–10:15 a.m. Hike to Morning Destination

Hikes typically range from 1/2 of a mile to 2 miles depending on the destination. We change locations daily, typically frequenting Sherwood Forest, Hundred Acre Wood, The Enchanted Wood, Lion Lands, and Base Camp.

10:15–10:30 a.m. Snacktime & Intro Activity

Once we arrive at our destination, we take a break to fuel up on a snack (brought from home). During snack time, a counselor might also provide an introduction to the next activity, or read a related nature-based story to set the tone for the next activity.

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Seasonal Activity

Each day we will do one activity related to the seasonal theme. This could include camp cooking, shelter building, winter animal tracking, gardening, jack o' lantern volcanoes, sledding, decorating tree slice ornaments, snow science, or drinking hot cocoa around the campfire.

12:00–12:30 p.m. Lunchtime

Lunch will look different depending on the location—campers might eat at picnic tables, on stumps, on wooden benches, or even on a bed of pine needles nestled in the woods. Staff will have hand sanitizer for campers to use before lunch. Campers must bring a packed lunch from home, and all trash produced will be packed up in the camper's lunch box.

12:30–1:00 p.m. Group Game

The counselor will read the group and choose a game that involves moving and running if a group needs to get wiggles out after lunch, or a more stationary game if campers are tired from the morning hike and activities.

1:00–2:30 p.m. Unstructured Nature Play

Most important of all, campers get the opportunity each day to explore and relate with nature on their own terms. Campers get to choose what interests them, whether that's catching grasshoppers, following rabbit tracks, building forts, building a snowman, or playing on a see-saw log. The possibilities are purposefully endless. The counselors serve as facilitators, actively supervising and guiding campers to question and learn about the world around them.

2:30–3:00 p.m. Unhurried Time

We always leave ourselves a buffer to expand activities throughout the day, as the campers desire or need. We believe children are rushed through childhood, and it is not our goal to rush them through the day's activities at camp. If we do get through everything as planned, we might play another game, do a teambuilding activity, or wander the woods searching for the Backcountry Bigfoot.

3:00–3:30 p.m. Hike Back & Group Huddle

The group will retrace their steps from the morning, returning to Base Camp, and will end the day with a huddle.

3:30–4:00 p.m. Pick up and Centers

Campers will end their day how they started it, with a choice activity in our Base Camp Backyard.

Camp Policies & Expectations



Camper Ages

Camp Backcountry accepts campers ages 7 – 13 who are entering 2nd to 8th grades for our full-day Nature, Horse, and Art Camps. Campers ages 5 – 6 who are entering K to 1st grade may join us for Mini Camp, a pint-sized version of Camp Backcountry. The LIT program is for teens ages 14 - 17 who are entering 9th to 12th grades. To provide the best experience for all our campers, exceptions will not be made to the age restrictions. If you have a child who is entering the appropriate grade listed on the camp session, but who's birthday is too late to register for that session, contact CampBackcountry@hrcaonline.org for assistance.

Camper Behavior and Positive Guidance Strategies

Camp Backcountry has developed guidelines and expectations to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all campers. The Camp Director and Education Coordinators work closely with staff to implement teaching strategies that support positive behavior, through use of positive guidance strategies. Staff are trained on setting boundaries, but never use punishments, rewards, or timeouts. Our staff are trained on the basics of child development, to ensure expectations set are age appropriate.

If initial staff efforts to redirect challenging behaviors have failed, we will follow a 3-step process:

- 1) Conference with the parents to ensure we are all working towards the same goals for the child and come up with a support plan.
- 2) The child will be put on a behavior modification plan.
- 3) Suspension from camp.

7

The Camp Director reserves the right to suspend a camper for the remainder of a camp session or for the duration of the summer if the camper behaves in a way that is considered to be detrimental to the quality and best interest of the camp or other campers.

If your child has any known social, emotional, or behavioral challenges, we encourage you to include this information on the online paperwork on CampInTouch. No child will ever be singled out or treated differently due to information disclosed. This information helps our staff provide the best possible camp experience for your child.

Special Needs

Our staff will work to the best of their ability to assist participants with special needs and we will make every possible effort to accommodate each camper on a case-by-case basis. Due to the outdoor and exploratory nature of Camp Backcountry, campers must be able to move around on uneven terrain. If you have questions about your child's ability to participate at Camp Backcountry, please contact the Camp Director at 303-471-8876 or AnnaKate.Hein@HRCAonline.org.

Prohibited Items

- **Knives and Weapons**
- **Fire Starting Materials**
- **Spending Money** – We will have Camp Backcountry apparel and gear for sale throughout the week. Purchases can only be made by an adult with a credit card.
- **Sporting Equipment** – Campers wishing to use their own horseback riding helmet may do so, with approval. Bike helmets are not allowed while riding.

- **Chewing Gum** – We want to keep your camper safe as they run and play. Additionally, gum is made of plastic and when left on the ground is litter.
- **Use of Electronic Devices** – We ask that electronic devices are either left at home or turned off/to silent and left in the campers backpack. This includes cell phones, smart watches with calling capabilities, iPods, iPads, and tablets. If a camper needs to contact home for any reason, staff will facilitate this. If you need to talk to your child, please call the Camp Backcountry cell phone at 720-671-5958 and we will connect you with your child.

Personal Items

Everything you send to camp with your child **MUST** be labeled with their name. If you prefer to label with something other than a sharpie or tape, we find that Label Daddy stickers and Name Bubble stickers work well to label anything you can imagine. All personal items including water bottle, lunch, sunscreen, hat, and extra layers must fit inside your camper's backpack. Your camper will keep their backpack with them throughout the day.

Lunch

Pack a large, healthy lunch each day, avoiding lunchables, sugary snacks, soda, and energy drinks. In addition to a full lunch, please pack two additional snacks. We keep our campers active, and they tend to get quite hungry throughout the camp day!

We encourage the use of reusable containers in your child's lunch. We practice a "pack it in, pack it out" mentality and any trash produced from lunch or snacks will be put back in your child's lunchbox or backpack and sent back home. Campers will also participate in friendly competitions throughout the week to see which camp groups produce the least amount of trash from their lunches.

Lost and Found

We hold all lost and found items for one week after each camp season. At this time, all lost and found items that have not been claimed will either be donated to our gear shed or to a local thrift store.

To help avoid your child's possessions from ending up in lost and found, please write your camper's name on everything that they bring to camp. It also helps if you allow your camper to help you pack their bag so they know what they have with them at camp each day.

Communication with Camp Backcountry

The camp team will keep you informed with any session information updates and reminders via email, push notifications through the Companion app, or text message.

If you need to talk to a staff member working with your child, or talk to your child, please call the **Camp Backcountry cell phone at 720-671-5958** and we will relay information or connect you with your child.

If you have any questions prior to your child's camp session, please contact us at campbackcountry@hrcaonline.org or 720-205-5533

Visitors at Camp

All visitors are required to check in with the Camp Backcountry office upon arrival. We have an open door policy for parents/legal guardians, but we kindly ask that visits are limited to drop-off and pick-up windows. All children present at camp must be registered for the camp, with complete registration paperwork completed on CampInTouch.

Video Viewing

Videos will only be shown when we are required to move indoors for an extended period of time due to severe weather, and all videos and movies will be educational and related to the weekly theme. All videos shown will be G or PG rated and have been previewed and deemed appropriate before viewing.

Health & Safety



Camp Staff

Our number one concern at Camp Backcountry is the health and safety of your child. Our staff are a mixture of outdoor educators, school teachers, and college students, all who are qualified childcare professionals. All staff undergo multiple background checks, are certified in First Aid and CPR, and complete a week-long training in the areas of child development, group management, positive guidance strategies, and outdoor group safety. Our camp staff are responsible for the health, safety, and discipline of campers when camp groups are working with outside contractors who come to Camp Backcountry. Camp Backcountry always maintains required staff to camper ratios, not including contractors from the special activity.

Sickness

We ask that you do not send your child to camp if they show or have any of the following symptoms within the past 24 hours: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, or any illness making it difficult to breathe. If your child becomes sick during camp hours with any of the above symptoms, you will be required to make arrangements to have them picked up immediately.

Medication

We can only accept medications that are in their original packaging, not expired, labeled with your child's full name, and paired with the appropriate medication form signed by a doctor and uploaded to CampInTouch. This includes all over the counter medications, prescription medications, and homeopathic remedies. If your child carries an EPI-Pen or an inhaler, you must have the Allergy/Asthma Action Plan form completed by a doctor and uploaded to CampInTouch.

On the first day of camp all medications will be checked by staff at the check-in table for proper documentation and safe keeping. Medications will be locked up overnight and will be returned to the parent/legal guardian on the last day of the camp session.

Camp Backcountry is in compliance with the Nurse Practice Act and employs a nurse Consultant that meets with our staff. The nurse meets all qualifications as directed by the Colorado Department of Human Services.

Hospital/Medical Emergency

You are required to provide your hospital of choice on the medical information section of CampInTouch. Your child will only be transported to a hospital via ambulance in the case of a severe or life threatening injury. In the case of a less severe injury, the Camp Director or another staff member will contact you and you will be required to make arrangements to come transport your child home or to the doctor or hospital, as necessary. Cost for treatment arising out of an accident or injury at Camp Backcountry is the responsibility of the camper's parent or legal guardian.

Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

Camp Backcountry staff are prepared to manage food allergies and common dietary restrictions. In order to do this, it is pertinent that all allergies or restrictions are properly noted on your camper's medical forms on CampInTouch. To minimize exposure to potential allergens, Camp Backcountry has a policy that campers may not share food.



Camp License

Camp Backcountry is licensed by the CO Dept of Human Services. The license indicates that the program has met the required standards for the operation of a childcare facility. Camp Backcountry follows all guidelines to ensure your child's health and safety. For more information, please contact the CO Office of Child Care Services at 303-866-5958.

Child Abuse

Colorado state law requires that childcare providers report any known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If any camp staff member suspects child abuse or neglect they will report it to 1-844-CO-4-KIDS.

Weather

- **Rain** - We do not move indoors due to rain, unless it is accompanied by lightening or thunder. Please send your camper with a raincoat if rain is expected in the forecast. We like to say there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.
- **Lightning** - If a thunderstorm is approaching, we will immediately move to our emergency shelter. Camp staff communicate with each other and the Camp Director throughout the camp day to ensure all camp groups make it back to shelter prior to a storm. If you see green traffic cones out blocking our property entrance during pick-up, simply turn and follow the cones up to the classroom building where you will be able to pick-up your camper. Horse Camp parents: in the event of a thunderstorm if you do not see the campers at the Horse Corrals, follow signs up to our Base Camp.
- **Sun/Heat** - Activities that take place in the sun or that require lots of movement will be minimized as necessary due to extreme temperatures. All staff are CPR and First Aid certified and are aware of the symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. We have shade structures and many groves of trees where campers may seek shelter from the sun throughout the day. For safety, hiking and horseback riding may be cut short on particularly hot days.

- **Fire or Flood** - If there is an emergency or natural disaster such as a fire, flash flood, or tornado, all camp groups will immediately proceed to the nearest secure location. As soon as it is determined to be safe, if necessary, the campers will be evacuated from the property. If necessary, parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child from camp via text message or push notification via the Companion app.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of any emergency, emergency personnel will be notified if and when necessary, and parents will be contacted as quickly as possible. In the event that Camp Backcountry has to be evacuated, campers will go to a safe place designated by Camp Backcountry. If campers are not able to return to Base Camp, the parent/guardian will be contacted for immediate pick-up from this location.

Transportation

If transportation is necessary, campers will be transported in the Camp Backcountry 12 passenger van, trucks, or a UTV. All campers are required to wear a seatbelt while the vehicle is in motion. Every camper is required to have their own seatbelt. In case of an emergency while transporting campers, local services will be called immediately, followed by the Camp Director.

Attendance

The parent/guardian dropping off must check the camper in to camp each day at the check-in table. Staff will do a secondary attendance check once the child enters their age-based "classroom." Face to name checks will be completed by staff every hour of the day, or any time a group changes locations, to ensure the whereabouts and safety of every camper.



Registration & Paperwork

How to Register

To register for any of our Camp Backcountry sessions, please visit our website at www.CampBackcountry.org, click on the type of camp session you are interested in, then click "Register Now". You will need to set up an account with Highlands Ranch Community Association if you do not already have an account. Anyone, whether you live in Highlands Ranch or not, may set up an account with HRCA and register for Camp Backcountry. To set up an account, call member services at 303-471-7020.

Friends of the Backcountry Save!

Gain access to the lowest session prices and support the Backcountry Wilderness Area Fund 501c3 nonprofit by becoming a Friend of the Backcountry at the Fox Level or above. This tax-deductible, annual membership affords you discounts on every Camp Backcountry session, among many other benefits including Backcountry Wilderness Area gear! Head to www.hrcaonline.org/backcountryfriends to signup!

Required Paperwork

CampInTouch is a secure network that we use to collect personal, medical, and emergency contact information electronically for Camp Backcountry. Not only does CampInTouch streamline the paperwork process, but it also ensures we have a way to communicate with you in the event of an illness, injury, or larger scale emergency.

How it works:

- You'll receive a link in your registration email from HRCA that will direct you to the Application Form on CampInTouch
- Enter your information to create a free account, or log in if you already have an existing account (note: CampInTouch accounts are separate from your HRCA account)
- Select the session(s) that you registered your child for and submit the application.
- You will then be directed to your home page and will access the rest of the paperwork there. You can either continue in the CampInTouch browser or download and use the sister app called Campanion to finish the paperwork and upload forms. Campanion uses the same login information as CampInTouch.
- Enter the required information, like medical conditions, and any additional paperwork and press submit.
- CampInTouch will show you what forms need to be completed or if any are missing.
- Contact campbackcountry@hrcaonline.org if you have any trouble or questions about completing your child's paperwork on CampInTouch.
- All paperwork is due by May 1st

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations made more than two weeks in advance of a camp session's start will be granted a refund minus a non-refundable \$50 deposit.

Cancellations made within two weeks (14 days) of a camp session's start will not be granted a refund.

Transfer requests will be granted up to two weeks (14 days) prior to the start date of your registered session, pending availability. All transfers must be made to another Camp Backcountry session in 2023. Transfers can NOT be made to the following summer.

Parents wishing to cancel a child from camp should provide written notification via email to campbackcountry@hrcaonline.org. You must include your child's full name, your child's age, and the dates and name of the camp session you wish to cancel.

There will be a 24-hour grace period after enrollment to cancel and receive a full refund, less a \$5 cancellation fee.

No exceptions.

Contact Information

Prior to your child's camp session:

CampInTouch Paperwork & Cancellation Requests:
campbackcountry@hrcaonline.org, 720-205-5533

Camp Director: annakate.hein@hrcaonline.org,
303-471-8876

While your child is at camp:

Email: campbackcountry@hrcaonline.org

Camp Cell Phone: 720-671-5958

Cancellation & Refund Policy

30° 29' 31.0" N  104° 58' 25.6" W

FIND YOUR WILD AT CAMP BACKCOUNTRY



www.campbackcountry.org