

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

What do you do first before you even load your stock into the trailer?? **PLAN**

What do you consider when you plan?

- ▲ Determine where you are going
- ▲ Decide how long you will be
- ▲ If in a group consider the level of experience, good rule of thumb is to plan to the LOWEST level.
- ▲ Consider the potential weather
- ▲ Get maps and go over the routes, know how you could get out quickly in an emergency
- ▲ Gain Knowledge of the area
 - Talk with the rangers for visitation usage, weather, restrictions, wildlife (bear) issues
- ▲ Plan alternative camp sites and routes
- ▲ How about meals?
 - Plan the meals and rations
 - repackage into reusable containers or baggies
- ▲ What about equipment?
 - Why can't I take my favorite set of cast iron cookware??
 - Can't I just add pack stock to bring all the stuff I want??
- ▲ Anyone know how much pressure per foot a horse or mule generates? **1500psi!**
 - And horseshoes intensifies this pressure.
 - The goal is to minimize the number of stock you need to take.
 - Lightweight and compact to reduce the number of stock needed thus reducing the sign of passage
- ▲ Plan for stock containment NOW
Examples of stock containment are:
 - Highlines
 - Portable corrals
 - Hobbles
 - Pickets

What do you need to do to get ready once you have PLANNED where and when you are going? **PREPARE**

What are some things to do when preparing for a trip? (ASK for input)

- ▲ Get yourself and your stock in shape
- ▲ Take only experienced stock; this is NOT the place to train your unbroken colt
- ▲ PRACTICE at home the techniques you will use
 - Try out the containment method – at camp is not the time to find out your horse goes ballistic in hobbles
- ▲ Try out your panniers and hitches at home.

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- ▲ Get your stock used to the feed that they will be eating; get that gut flora and fauna up to speed. The trailhead or the backcountry is not the place to have your horse colic.
- ▲ Let's talk about weed free hay – WHY? When should you begin feeding it before leaving? (about 3 days before).
- ▲ Get your stock wormed and vaccinated. In the back country 3 days out is not the place to have an equine health issue.
- ▲ Shoe your stock or use easyboots. If you take easyboots, make sure you know how to use them. (personal examples of how I have used easyboots and why I don't carry a shoeing kit)
- ▲ Know how to use your GPS or compass so don't have to put up flagging, use paint or rock cairns.
- ▲ Even if you know the trails well, always bring a map in case you have to take an unplanned route.
- ▲ Get your gear together and weigh it
 - Write the weight of self contained items on themselves.
- ▲ Make sure everything has all its parts and works
 - Setting up camp is not the time to discover that you left the tent poles home.
 - In the dark is not the time to discover you have no clue how to get your new stove to work.
- ▲ Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies

Good planning and preparation can greatly increase your chance of having a great experience in the backcountry.

Co-instructors do you have anything to add?
What questions do you have??