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.
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 in not the place to have an equine health issue.

Shoe you stock or use easyboots. If you take easyboots, make sure you know how to use them. (personal examples of how I have used easyoots 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 incase you have to take an unplanned route.

Get you 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??