

## WINTER HUT INFORMATION

### 10th Mountain Division Hut System

Everyone going to a hut must read this information before departing.

Thank you for booking a trip with 10th Mountain Division Hut Association. We hope you enjoy your stay at the huts. The following information is provided to help you plan your trip and also to ensure that impact to wildlife and the fragile environment surrounding the huts will be minimized.

#### **Backcountry Preparedness**

The huts are situated between 9,700 and 11,700 feet in elevation. Weather in the mountains can change rapidly. A clear and calm morning at a trailhead can turn quickly (and without warning) into heavy snow and driving winds at 11,000 feet. Hypothermia, frostbite, and altitude sickness are common winter problems in the mountains. Be sure that you know how to prevent, recognize, and treat these potentially life-threatening conditions. Plan on bringing enough extra clothing, shelter, food, and water to spend the night out if you do not make it to the hut.

#### **Traveling to the Huts**

Be aware that going to a hut requires long climbs at high altitude. The Forest Service recognizes that the public trails that access the huts generally require the use of intermediate backcountry skiing skills. However, some trail sections are more difficult and may require more advanced skiing skills. You don't have to be an expert, but you should at least be strong and stable on your skis, have the right equipment, and know how to use it. Start early in the day and allow plenty of time to reach the hut. Remember, your pace must accommodate the weakest member of your group.

#### **Emergencies & First Aid**

Self-rescue is the responsibility of your group. Communication of any kind, even in an emergency, is not possible from most of the huts. If a member of your group is injured or becomes ill on the trail or at the hut, you cannot rely on outside help. Plan ahead and be prepared to execute a self-rescue. Your group should be equipped with first aid supplies and have experience in emergency medical procedures. The county sheriff should be contacted in the event of an emergency (see phone numbers below). Before departing for your trip, leave the following information with a responsible friend or relative:

1. Your automobile make and license plate number, the trailhead(s) you will be parking at, and the appropriate County Sheriff's number.
2. Your exact travel plans including dates, huts, routes, and your plans in case of an emergency.

#### **Sheriff's Office Phone Numbers**

Pitkin County 970-920-5310 (Margy's, Betty Bear)

Eagle County 970-479-2200 (Polar Star, Peter Estin, Harry Gates, Shrine Mountain Inn, Ben Eiseman, Fowler/Hilliard, Jackal, Vance's Cabin)

Lake County 719-486-1249 (Skinner, Uncle Bud's, 10th Mountain)

### **Cellular Phones**

A cellular phone can be helpful in the event of an emergency, however, communication is only possible from some of the huts and some segments of the trails. If problems do arise, **do not call 10th Mountain**. In case of emergency, contact the appropriate county sheriff's office (see numbers above). Please respect other hut users by keeping your phone out of sight and by not using it inside the hut.

### **The Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue Card**

The CORSAR card supports the Colorado Search and Rescue Fund, a program that reimburses county sheriffs for costs incurred during search and rescue operations. The CORSAR card costs \$3/year and can be purchased 10th Mountain and where hunting and fishing licenses are sold. 10th Mountain strongly encourages all hut users to support this program. If you hold a current Colorado hunting, fishing or ATV license, you are included in the CORSAR program and do not need a CORSAR card.

### **Group Leader**

Since the trip organizer may not be experienced in the backcountry, we recommend that your group discuss how decisions will be made in the field and who will be the leader in the event that problems arise. Be honest when assessing each member's strengths, skills, and experience. If no one in your group can provide leadership, you should consider hiring a guide. A list of permitted guides is available from 10th Mountain, and is also available on the 10th Mountain website at <http://www.huts.org>.

### **Route Finding**

This is one of the most important skills you need. You are responsible for finding the route to the hut. You must have experience in route finding in bad weather conditions and be skilled in reading topographic maps and navigating with a compass. Suggested winter routes are only intermittently marked. The markers consist of blue diamonds on National Forest land, and tree blazes in designated Wilderness Areas. From one marker, the next is usually not visible. Do not depend on there being a broken track to the hut, or assume that ski tracks originating at the trailhead will lead to the hut. The maps on the back of the brochure and on the 10th Mountain website are intended for trip planning only. They are not to be used for navigation. Detailed topographic maps should be purchased through 10th Mountain or local outdoor stores.

### **Topographic Maps**

United States Geological Survey Topographic maps (1:24,000 scale) with suggested routes and hut location shown (including mileages and elevations) are available for purchase from 10th Mountain. All groups should have at least one copy, and large groups should have multiple copies of the appropriate maps.

### **Suggested Equipment List**

This list should be used as a guide in helping you prepare for your trip. Never travel in the backcountry unprepared. None of this equipment is helpful unless it fits, it works, and you know how to use it!

- Skis, snowshoes, split snowboards, poles, and boots designed for the backcountry
- Backpack
- Climbing skins
- Wax kit
- Sleeping bag
- Headlamp with extra batteries
- Topographic maps
- Compass
- Shovel
- Bivouac sack
- Ground cloth
- Fire-starting kit (matches, lighter, starting fuel, etc.)
- Day pack
- Survival kit
- First-aid kit
- Repair kit
- Pocket knife
- Stove and pot (for emergency)
- Sunglasses and goggles
- Water bottles (widemouth)
- Sunscreen/Lip balm
- Food (be sure some food is edible without cooking, and that each person carries their own trail food)

Personal Clothing (wool or synthetics - no cotton):

- Parka
- Fleece Jacket/Vest
- Windshell
- Windpants
- Knickers/Pants/Tights
- Sweater
- Shirt
- Socks/extra pairs
- Personal items
- Earplugs
- Top and bottom underwear
- Mittens, overmitts, and gloves/extra pari ski gloves
- Hat, scarf, balaclava, neck gaiter
- Leg gaiters
- Down booties
- Hand-towel
- Personal pillowcase
- Alarm wristwatch

### Additional Recommended Equipment:

- Altimeter
- Probe pole
- Transceiver
- Ensolite or foam pad
- Extra ski tip
- Duct tape

### Hut Amenities

Each hut sleeps sixteen people divided among three or four bunk rooms. Huts are booked to capacity and are often occupied by more than one group. Please be courteous of others with respect to noise, quiet hours, use of alcohol, cooking, personal gear storage, etc. Overflow camping around the huts is not permitted. Huts include:

- Wood burning and propane cooking stoves
- Wood burning heating stove
- Firewood
- Eating/cooking utensils
- Mattresses/pillows on sleeping platforms
- Photovoltaic lighting
- Hut supplies (toilet paper, soap, cleaning supplies, trash bags, etc).

Propane and photovoltaic systems are not fail-proof. Backup systems are in place in the form of wood burning cook stoves and flashlights. Please read all instructions posted in the huts carefully and pack out all of your trash.

### Water

Water for drinking, cooking and cleaning is provided by melting snow. Huts are stocked with collection buckets and a large pot for melting snow. It is the hut users' responsibility to filter this water, if they chose to do so. Some huts are equipped with a pump in the kitchen that dispenses water from a roof-top catchment system. This water is for cleaning only. Do not drink this water, even if you filter it. Depending on the level of hut use and precipitation, the cistern could be dry at the time of your visit.

### Dogs

Dogs are not allowed at the huts.

### Forest Service Ranger District Numbers

Aspen 970-925-3445 (Margy's, Betty Bear)

Sopris 970-963-2266 (Harry Gates)

Eagle 970-328-6388 (Polar Star Inn, Peter Estin, Ben Eiseman)

Holy Cross 970-827-5715 (Shrine Mountain Inn, Fowler/Hilliard, Jackal, Vance's Cabin)

Leadville 719-486-0749 (Skinner, Uncle Bud's, 10th Mountain)

### Parking Issues and Motorized Use

Do not leave valuables in your car when parking at the trailhead. Unfortunately, cars have been

broken into and vandalized in the past. Since the huts were built for cross-country skiers and snowshoers, motorized access is strongly discouraged. USFS and 10th Mountain signed and enforced, non-motorized envelopes surround each hut. Any hut users that bring snowmobiles must leave the snowmobiles outside this boundary and ski or snowshoe into the hut, carrying their gear. Depending on motorized access or support is not recommended. For safety reasons, no person that is physically unable to ski or snowshoe out to a trailhead should attempt to access a hut using a snowmobile.

### **Arriving at the Hut**

The trip confirmation letter with your itinerary and hut door lock combination(s) is sent to the group organizer. Huts are locked with padlocks, so combinations are necessary for entry. There are no resident hut-keepers. Please post the confirmation letter on the board upon arrival. All users must have a reservation or face eviction by those who do.

### **Arrival Checklist – Fire, Ice, and Snow Precautions**

- When first arriving at a hut, familiarize yourselves with emergency fire procedures and exits. Fire could occur at the hut and would likely be either a structure fire (inside the hut) or a wildland fire (in the forest outside the hut). In order to decrease the chance of a fire-related tragedy, you need to be aware of the hazards of both types of fires and what to do if either one occurs. If a structure fire is uncontrollable, get everybody out, with their boots and clothing if possible. Report any damage to 10th Mountain. See Summer Hut Use Information sheet for additional fire information.
- When first arriving at a hut, evaluate hazards due to falling snow and ice that could occur and avoid exposing yourself to those inherent risks when collecting snow and moving around the hut.

### **Arrival and Departure Times**

The official arrival and departure time is 1:00pm. Please be considerate of other hut users and do not arrive before or depart after this time.

### **Hut Instructions**

**Familiarize yourselves with all hut instructions posted at the huts. Please remember that the propane stoves and the photovoltaic systems are not fail-proof. We do not refund hut trips because of mechanical failures.**

### **Cancellations & Changes**

Cancellations and Changes must be made 30 days prior to your trip start date in order to receive and 80% hut credit for a future trip. Cancellations made less than 30 days prior to your trip start date will result in forfeiture of your payment. No refunds.

**Avalanche Awareness**

10th Mountain designated trails have been selected to avoid significant avalanche hazard terrain, but some degree of danger always exists in the backcountry. Before departing, it is advisable that groups acquire an avalanche advisory and snow conditions report from the local U.S. Forest Service office and the Colorado Avalanche Information Center (CAIC).

CAIC on line (statewide): [www.caic.state.co.us](http://www.caic.state.co.us)  
Summit County (Summit County area): 970-668-0600  
U.S. Forest Service/Minturn (local): 970-827-5687  
U.S. Forest Service/Aspen (local): 970-920-1664  
Denver/Boulder (statewide): 303-275-5360  
Colorado Springs (statewide): 719-520-0020

If you have any questions, please call 10th Mountain at 970-925-5775, 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday (November-March), 8am - 4pm Monday through Friday (April-October), and Saturday 8am - 12pm (December-February).