



Leave No Trace Principles



USFWS/Vergial Harp

Paddle the Monopoly Marsh of the Mingo Wilderness in Missouri.

Try wilderness camping in a few refuges like Innoko National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska.



UWSFWS/Kevin Oimoen

Wilderness areas are intended to be free and unrestrained, but the Wilderness Act of 1964 also intended for wilderness areas to be available for public recreation, science and education. Enjoy hiking, seeing wildlife, paddling, cross-country skiing, horseback riding and camping in certain wilderness areas.

There are 75 wilderness areas on 63 units of the National Wildlife Refuge System in 25 states. Find wilderness areas at fws.gov/refuges/whm/wilderness.html.

Here are the Leave No Trace Seven Principles:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations for the area you plan to visit.
- Use a map and compass.

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Hike and camp on established trails, campsites, rock or gravel, dry grass or snow.
- Camp at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.

3. Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, pack it out.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap.

4. Leave What You Find

- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects.
- Use a lightweight stove for cooking and a candle lantern for light.

- If fire is permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans or mound fires.

- Burn all wood and coals to ash. Scatter cool ashes.

6. Respect Wildlife

- Do not follow, approach or feed wildlife.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times like mating, nesting, raising young.

7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Avoid loud voices, noises and cell phones. Let nature's sounds prevail.



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