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Highline Trail Llama's

Packing Pocket Guide*

(Co-Organized by Kristen Wall-Love and Albert Ellis Jr.)

Hello! Welcome to Highline Trail Llamas! We are so pleased that you have chosen us to help make your trip enjoyable, stress-free, and environmentally harmonious. This little guidebook should serve as a quick reference-just in case you can't remember every detail learned at orientation. We want you to enjoy our llamas as much as we do, and that involves knowing how to handle them on and off the trail.

In case you are new to llamas and llama trekking, here are a couple of things you should know outright:

1. You are responsible for them. They are bearing your load and are depending on you for leadership and basic care. **PLEASE BE OBSERVANT AND TAKE CARE TO NOTICE THEIR WELL BEING AT ALL TIMES!**
2. Llamas like you to be the leader, so be clear (but kind) about what it is you want. They respond well to gentle, quiet, fluid movements. If you follow this regimen, they will do as you ask.
3. Bullying and forcing a llama into things may seem to work temporarily. However, they will resent you and may begin to resent all humans. Of course we don't want that, so just ask nicely! Llamas are intuitive and intelligent. They know a lot more about you than you think! Body language is their game! So relax (don't tense your muscles), and most importantly **REMEMBER TO BREATHE!** They are also forgiving of mistakes, so please return the favor. No one is perfect (not even a llama). They all have their own unique personalities, so let them shine through!
4. Llamas are very stoic animals. If they are acting unusual or "stubborn", something needs to be adjusted. You may have to adjust their pack, lighten their load a little, change your walking pace, or increase the number of breaks you are taking. It all coincides with being observant to what is happening around you.
5. Llama trekking is much different than a marathon hiking expedition. Trekking is about enjoying the scenery and smelling the roses. The llamas will be enjoying the view just as much as you are! This is like a little vacation for them as well. So please allow the animals to graze lush vegetation at least an hour (total) a day. Find a good place to camp that accommodates you as well as them. Keep in mind that they are your companions, not your indentured servants. Think of them as friends that are nice enough to carry your gear!

*BENNETT, JACK AND VICK, LINDA. ZEN AND THE ART OF LLAMA PACKING, COPYRIGHT 1995. RENDEZVOUS LLAMAS Some wonderful thoughts and format helped give rise to this booklet.

ABOUT LLAMAS

Llamas are superior pack animals. They are quiet, courteous, curious, intelligent, strong and agile. Llamas have soft pads on the bottom of their foot like a dog. This is optimal in helping to reduce environmental impact. They have two toes that operate independently, which makes them very surefooted and easy to pack on rough terrain. They are also very clean. They tend to go to the bathroom in the same spots if they have been there before. As mentioned previously, llamas each have their own individual personality-like people. They are interesting creatures, and it is hard to explain llamas in a way that people will understand. The only way to know what llamas are all about is to spend some quality time with them. Here are some cliff notes about a few llama traits that may make you say “hmmmmmm?”:

Spitting – Many people ask about spitting. Llamas do indeed spit, but 99% of the time they spit at each other, not humans. Their spit is not harmful, just smelly. A premise to a spitting episode is when they put their noses way up in the air and their ears are back. So, this is your warning, that “hey, that llama is going to spit at the other llama-lookout!!” Just kidding, sometimes all they have to do is warn the other llama and the other llama will stop whatever s/he is doing. Many times an episode can be avoided by not letting anyone sniff rears. This is very offensive as you probably can guess, but llamas have this nosy little part of them that has to try. If they want to communicate to say hello, they may go face to face, but not face to rear end.

Llamas have varying degrees of spit. They can just spit air, which equals a mild irritation of some sort. If they happen to be eating, they may spit what is in their mouth at the time. This can include pellets, corn, hay, grass, water, etc. The last form of spit is regurgitated cud brought up from their first stomach compartment. This means they are extremely peeved! When this one happens you will know it! It is green and has a foul odor. It has such a foul odor that the spitter (and most likely the spitee) will hang their mouths open for about 15 minutes and not be able to eat in that time. Don't be alarmed, that is totally normal. Now that we all have a graduate degree in spit, let's move on! (Llamas also sneeze. It sounds like they are spitting, but after they sneeze they will have a look on their face for a second saying, “what just happened?”)

Humming - Some llamas will make a humming sound. Although we don't know exactly what they are “saying”, we have a good idea of what they are feeling. Their tone can range from what seems like curiosity through anxiety. On some occasions it seems like they may be answering you. Sometimes it is just a reaction to being in a strange place away from home. Most of the time, you will hear humming from your llama if s/he is separated from his/her llama buddies. Llamas are herd animals, so they like safety in numbers (at least one other llama). If you and your trail mates get separated, catch up or wait up and your llama will be happier! she/he is most likely just talking when humming. We haven't noticed this to be a serious distress signal.

Snorting – This may happen (especially from males) when they see something strange on the trail or if they see another llama. Don't panic if your llama(s) starts snorting, but do take your llama off the trail and let whatever it is (horse, other llamas, goats etc) pass by.

Alarm Calling – speaking of seeing something strange on the trail, llamas have this funny little thing called an alarm call. Some llamas do this at every little thing, but for the most part, they do it when they see something they have never seen before, and/or if they see something that they think means to harm them and the other llamas. It is a difficult thing to describe in writing, but is a high pitched noise almost like a horse whinny. Then little snorts/barks happen at the end as it dies off to nothing. Don't worry, you will know it if you hear it. Usually this happens when they are staked at the campsite. Always check to see what the problem is. Even in the middle of the night, if a llama alarms calls more than once, you should get up and check to see what the problem is-even if you don't feel like it.

+Note: Llamas do not like to be in close proximity to moose and may alarm call. If you see a moose try and make a detour if possible.

Handling – Llamas are fuzzy and cute. They sincerely enjoy being in the company of humans. They are very interested and will investigate their surroundings. However, most llamas do not like to be handled excessively. Resist the temptation to hold and hug them like you would a dog or cat. They usually don't mind if you stroke them on their neck. This is their least sensitive spot when it comes to touching. Some of their MOST sensitive spots, are the legs and face. Some tolerate touching better and in more places than others do. They are individuals and you will get to know your llama.

Tail Wagging – Unlike dogs, when llamas wag their tails it means they are irritated about something. This is usually the first thing they will do to show that they are not happy about something that is happening.

Kicking – Llamas seldom kick, and because of their padded feet, it is not a serious threat like a horse kick. It is another sign of irritation. Usually if llamas kick they are trying to get a fly off their legs, or maybe the cinch is pinching their wool. They don't kick AT you and most likely won't do it at all.

Kushing – This is the llama word for lying down with the legs tucked up underneath. They will do this to relax in camp, or for a couple of other reasons. They will kush if a horsefly or bee is bothering them around their legs and belly. The only way in their mind to stop the insect is to deny access to those vulnerable areas. If a llama kushes for no apparent reason, they may be a problem with the pack or any number of things. Please refer to "Difficulties on the Trail."

General Handling

The halters will already be on for you when you receive your llamas. Please do not remove the halter at any time.

Whenever the llamas are tied to **ANYTHING**, please use the proper knots shown in class. Mostly you will use the quick release knot with the exception of picketing. It is also advisable to carry a pocketknife at all times in case of emergency.

Please make sure most debris is out of the llama's wool before you re-saddle. A brush will be provided for your use. Most llamas get irritated when you pluck things out of their wool with your fingers. It pulls his or her wool, just as someone would pull bubble gum out of your hair-ouch! Sometimes it can't be avoided so be delicate. Hold the wool down and gently pull the debris out. If possible use a brush and try to brush it out of the wool using quick short strokes.

Color pictures of plants that are poisonous to llamas are also in this booklet. **Please take care** when picketing your llama (and during breaks from walking) that they are not in reach of any of these toxic plants.

When leading, always leave some slack in the line (meaning that the line should not look like a "U" and should not be a tight line-a "shallow" line somewhere in between) so you are not pulling your llama's head all the time. Imagine if you were the llama and someone was jerking your head around. It would be uncomfortable and irritating. Please be gentle. They usually only require slight pressure on the halter to respond.

When following another llama stay at least 8-10 feet behind the llama in front of you. If you tailgate the llama in front of you, they will most likely tailgate their human and there will be a traffic jam! An exception to this rule is if the llama in front of you is dragging along. If you step closer to his rear, he will step up a little faster.

LOADING THE PANNIERS

Packing up the panniers can seem cumbersome, but practice makes better! The goals are to make the panniers as effective and comfortable as possible for the llamas. Here are some important guidelines for making this possible:

Make sure the panniers are balanced within one pound, This may be challenging, but of the utmost importance. Do not put more than 80 pounds (total) on any llama.

Tip: Weigh each individual component you will be taking. Place a piece of masking tape with the corresponding weight on each item. This will expedite packing the panniers

Note: Panniers that weigh exactly the same can still have different centers of gravity, which will cause the saddle to shift. Imagine two people of equal weight

on a teeter-totter. One is sitting on the very end and the other is sitting near the center of the board. Obviously they will not balance well.

HERE ARE SOME SPECIFIC TIPS TO LOADING THE PANNIERS:

Our panniers are water resistant, but we still recommend that you pack your things in waterproof bags or line them with garbage bags just to be safe.

Heavy items should go in the bottom of the pack and light ones on the top.

Try and put tents and sleeping bags (or any durable) in the front of the packs because this part of the pannier takes the most abuse on the trail from rubbing up against things.

Inflexible items should be placed on the outside of the pack so nothing is poking the llama in the ribs.

When weighing the packs it is easier to have two people to assist (one to hold the pack just off the ground and the other to read the weight). This must be done EVERY time the llamas are loaded for the trail-not just the first day.

NOTE: It may be helpful to have some method of organization as to what goes where in which pannier-especially if you have more than one llama.

AT THE TRAILHEAD

You've made it to the trailhead! Congratulations!

We will transport the llamas for delivery and pick up from the trailhead.

Your panniers should already be backed and weighed out by this time (if you took the class the previous day and received your panniers).

Make sure your vehicle is locked and you have everything you need before embarking. This includes ID, car keys etc. We recommend that you do not bring pets for their own safety.

Now it is time to saddle the llamas and start your adventure!

SADDLING

Again, this is easier with two people. It doesn't really matter from which side you saddle the llamas, but we usually do it from the left side (that is, hooking and unhooking the cinches).

Tie or have another person hold the llama while you put the gear on the animal. Remember to always use the quick release knot!

Make sure the proper saddle goes with the correct llama. They are all labeled with their names and each llama fits that particular saddle best.

All of the llamas (the group of them) should be saddled before any panniers are put on to allow time for the wool to compress under the cinches etc,

Put on the saddle pad first. Then place the saddle on the llama so that the front of the cinch falls directly behind the front leg. Be sure that the saddle is centered over the backbone of the animal. That means the “forks” of the saddle line up with the center of the llama’s neck.

Hooking the cinches can be done a couple of ways. Pick whichever feels most comfortable. One person passes the cinch from one side under the animal to the other waiting person on the opposite side. Or, a person can just bend down and reach across the underside of the llama and take hold of the cinch and bring it across in a fluid motion.

Take care that no wool is pinched in the clasp. The front cinch has to be very snug. TO tighten, put four fingers under strap near the clasp and pull up (this is the strap that is around the belly of the animal). Pull down on the loose end with your free hand, This ensures that no wool will become tangled. When you have tightened the cinch, your four fingers that are under the strap should feel tight against the llama before pulling them out. Please check this cinch shortly after leaving most likely it will need to be tightened again. Keep a loose eye on it. If you notice the pack heavily rocking on the llama’s back during the day (assuming that the packs are well balanced), the cinch needs to be tightened. If you are having trouble tightening the cinch adequately or loosening it, check the other side and adjust that side to give you more or less strap to work with on the other side. Unless you are starting a steep descent, the front cinch is the only one that should need any adjusting.

Follow the same procedure for hooking the rear cinch. However, the rear cinch does not have to be as tight because it is on the llama’s stomach. You should be able to put 4 fingers under a snug strap. Also be careful that if you have a male that the cinch is not riding on his penis sheath. It should be well in front of the sheath.

Hook the chest strap across the front of the llama. It should be centered and on the wooly part of the chest. This does not need to be snug, just enough to resist the pack weight when going uphill. Then hook the middle strap that runs from the chest plate to the front cinch in between the front legs. If the hook is not centered enough to hook these together you may have to adjust the front cinch from either side to center the receiving hook. This should not be tight, but not loose enough to obstruct the llamas walking ability.

Just before loading the panniers onto the saddle retighten the cinches as to the criteria above.

Since the panniers have to be loaded one at a time, try to support the first one with your knee or by holding it up a little until the other pannier is put on the other side. Simply put the loops of the packs over the opposite side of the saddle. Another person may assist because the panniers may be a bit heavy.

Adjust the panniers height by the straps that go around the outside of the pack. The center of gravity of the panniers should be not higher than the llamas’ back, but not lower than the bottom of the saddle. If the packs are too low they will bang into the ribs and

irritate the llama. If they are too high, it will most likely throw the animal off balance too easily.

After the whole process is through, check to make sure the llama can move freely and doesn't seem to be uncomfortable.

Be sure to check that the cinches are tight enough a little while after you start your trip. (Make sure the cinches are tight enough so that the panniers are not rocking and sliding back and forth as this can be very irritating and uncomfortable to the animal).

ON THE TRAIL

LEADING – There is a two-fold purpose for the leads being 12 feet long. One is to allow the llamas to graze during breaks without having to get out the picket line to tie them out. Also this is to ensure that the llama has enough lead not to be on top of you, but not too far behind. Give the llama as much of the lead as s/he wants after you get a rhythm going (be sure it is not dragging on the ground). Some people like to hold the end of the line in their left hand and grasp the lead a little further up the rope with one hand. Lastly, some like to tie a knot in the very end of the lead, so that if the animal happens to balk, they have that to help stop the rope from going through their hands.

Something very important to remember is to NEVER wrap the lead around your hand or tie it to yourself or your pack (if you have one). If the animal happens to get frightened by something and it is tied around your hand it is going to hurt and possibly do some damage. The same idea applies if the lead is tied to your belt loop etc.

STRINGING – It is quite common to string llamas together. This is accomplished by taking a llama's lead and literally tying it to the ring on the back of another llama's saddle using the quick release knot. No more than 2-3 llamas should be strung together. If your llamas are strung together, make sure you unstring them before tying them out for a break. NEVER tie the lead llama to something with others strung behind him/her. If you do decide to string your llamas they will be fine in either order, but you might find that one order seems to work a little better than the other. One llama may be a better leader or follower, or one may set a better pace than the other. It is totally up to you – whichever order works better.

Although stringing is fine, we ask that in extremely narrow or steep parts of the trail that you lead the llamas separately. This also applies if a stream or river you are crossing is wide and/or deeper than ankle's depth.

CHECK THE LOAD – As mentioned earlier, it is important to check the load shortly after you start to see if the cinches need to be adjusted. Another important time to check is after walking a steep incline. Especially downhill walks may cause the saddle to scoot forward onto the llamas' shoulders. This will cause chafing and discomfort. If you see this happening, stop and fix it as soon as possible. You may be able to get away with stopping on level ground and pulling it back a bit (be careful not to pull wool). Then again, you may have to unload and saddle up again. Always keep an eye on the saddle and make sure that it is centered on the llamas back perfectly-that is the "forks" of the saddle line up with the center of the llama's neck.

COFFEE BREAKS – Be careful not to speed along the trail leaving your loyal companion huffing and puffing carrying 80 pounds of stuff. Llamas do best (and can cover more distance in one day) walking at a medium pace. If the scenery is a blur and you are too out of breath to talk, you need to slow down. The point of using llamas with their quiet manner and loyal stewardship is not to see how many miles you can do in one grueling day. If that is the case, the llamas say, “take your own stuff!” Stop about every hour and take a break. Stop more frequently if you are gaining elevation. If you are doing long, steep hills, you may have to stop every 200-300 steps. A good rule of thumb is walk 2 minutes and rest for 2 minutes while gaining steep elevation. If your llamas are panting or seem to be labored in their breathing, you need to take more frequent breathers. This is not to say to take longer breathers, just more frequent ones.

When you take a break, tie the llamas up separately out of the other’s reach. If you take a long break (more than 15 minutes) take the panniers off so they can relax, munch, and lie down (kush). If there is no convenient tree or rock to tie the llama to simply tie them to the panniers using the quick release knot. This works great in meadows because they have a full circle to get the most grass in a short time. Make sure there are no poisonous plants in their area. If you are not sure, take the pictures in this book and compare. Llamas can and have easily died from ingesting these plants.

TRAIL CIRCUMSTANCES

ROCKS - be very careful about walking over loose rocks with the llamas. They are very surefooted, but who is when the footing can go out from under you in a second – not to mention the fact that they can easily injure their legs in unseen holes. Don’t take the llamas into places where you know the footing will not be solid.

DEADFALL – Llamas can jump well, but we prefer them not to. Jumping can disrupt the panniers and can throw the llamas off balance. This in turn can throw you off balance. The llamas prefer to step over things. If any deadfall is more than 2 feet height, try and lead the llama around it rather than over it. Be sure to always check for sharp broken off branches that can injure the llamas or you.

JUMPING – the llamas may try to jump across mud, narrow creek beds and other obstacles. Do not let them jump these things. Take a hold of their lead about 6 inches from the halter. Stand to the side in case they do jump. It is a good idea to unstring the llamas because if the back llama jumps, the leader will be forced to as well. As mentioned above, jumping can injure you and the llama. Jumping something dislodges the panniers and causes the weight to shift. After all the balancing we did, we don’t want to mess it up now. Also, if the llama misjudges s/he can run into you. This is why we ask you to stand to the side of the llamas.

STREAM CROSSING – Llamas are usually good about crossing water, but have been known to be a little hesitant at times. If this is the case, give them a second to check it out and coax them on by giving gentle tug and release signals. Make sure the stream is not too deep or rocky at the point where you are crossing. Another important factor to keep in mind is to make sure where you are crossing is not too steep an entry. The more level the better. Usually on paths that are well used and known, the streams you cross are no problem at all. If the stream is a little deeper or wider, lead the llamas across one at a time.

BEFORE you cross, stop at the edge and see if your llama would like a cool drink. Let your llama have opportunities to drink, but don't be alarmed if they drink little or nothing during the day.

For some reason, llamas tend to want to take a potty break while standing in water. For environmental reasons, you want to prevent this from happening. If the llama stops suddenly mid-cross, give him/her a firm pull on the lead. Pull him/her all the way across if you have to. Don't let them drink in the middle-only at the edge before you cross because if they stop in the middle this will increase their urge to go potty in the water.

POTTY BREAKS – If you are walking along and all of a sudden your llama stops and won't go for no apparent reason, or start to walk off the trail he wants to take a potty break. S/he will spread the rear legs and crouch a little. If a male is peeing, it will take A LONG time, much longer than you would ever expect. So, just hand out and enjoy whatever is around you because you will have a couple of minutes. If one llama starts, that will most likely stimulate the others to go at that time as well. When they are done try not to leave a lot of poop in the middle of the trail for others.

NARROW AND OFF TRAIL TERRAIN – If you are going around a lot of trees it is best to hold the lead closer to the llama to have more control of where s/he goes. Steer the turns very wide for the llamas so their packs don't rub unnecessarily on everything. If the llamas are strung, the second llama may not go the same route around objects as the first one did. It may be helpful to walk them separately through challenging places.

BOGS – bogs are not a good place to be for several reasons. For one, they contain many poisonous plants. Second, it is destructive to the fragile wetlands to go trouncing through them. Last, the llamas can sink and get stuck. So, do not walk through bogs. Simply find a dryer place to cross or go around.

BRIDGES – Bridges should be about 3 feet wide in order to safely take a llama across. Handrails are definitely a plus. If there are none, lead the llamas over one at a time. Never lead llamas over logs because they can easily slip off and injure themselves and possibly you.

TRAIL MUNCHING – If you stop on the trail it is ok for the llamas to munch away. Llamas love pine needles and other delicacies that are not in their pastures at home. However, make sure they are eating non-poisonous snacks. Don't let them munch when you are walking. They usually won't do this anyway.

EXTREME WEATHER – Because of their wool, llamas are prone to heat stress. The llamas have been sheered as much as possible to decrease the possibility of heat stress, but it is never eliminated. Because of Wyoming's drastic temperature range during the year we cannot shear the llamas down to the skin for the summer months. They must be prepared for the possibility of subzero temperatures as early as October or November. If it is extremely hot day rest more than usual, slow down, and pay attention to the llamas. If they are panting or being reluctant to walk take heed and rest them for a nice long break. The following are signs to watch out for: head down, dull eyes, wobbly knees, and being non-responsive to getting up if kushed. If you llama exhibits one, some, or all of these symptoms it is a very serious-even fatal situation. It must be attended to immediately. Find shade and take everything (including the saddle, pad and panniers) off

of a heat-stressed llama. Splash some water on their chests and light-wooled areas. These, along with resting will help to cool them down.

MEETING OTHER PEOPLE AND ANIMALS

Horses – Horses ALWAYS have the right of way over llamas. Many horses have never seen llamas and are naturally afraid of what they don't know. Some of them will just want to get the heck out of there and some will flat out spook.

If you see horses up ahead, find a place to get off the trail. Get as far off the trail as possible at least 30 yards if you can. Talk to the riders and let them know what you are doing.

Totally stop and let the group completely pass (and then some) and talk to the riders as they go by so the animals can hear familiar sounds and know that is it ok.

It is important to maintain good relations between the llama packers and all the other packers out there.

Other Animals – Sometimes you will meet other animals on the trail. Perhaps a goat or domestic sheep and of course dogs. Depending on the llama, s/he may react differently depending on whether s/he has encountered the animal before. The llama will most likely just look curiously and wide eyed at a new animal as long as it is not posing a threat. Many dogs are not leashed and may scare the llama, but try to put yourself in between the llama and the loose dog. You may want to get off the trail and let them pass avoiding any problems. If you happen to meet other llamas on the trail, be warned that the llamas may be very interested and challenge the other llamas. Be prepared to keep them apart.

Moose – As mentioned, llamas don't seem to like moose and may alarm call. As long as you are not in danger from the moose try to comfort the llama by talking to him/her saying it will be all right.

DIFFICULTIES ON THE TRAIL

Let me preface this section by saying that our llamas are almost always very well behaved and cooperative (angelic even). However, we like to have you be aware that there is a very small chance that this may not always be the case. So these things most likely won't happen to you, but just for the sake of warning here it is.

“Stubbornness” - This word is in quotes because most likely the llama is not being stubborn, instead something needs to change. This was mentioned earlier, but we will reiterate. First, use the gentle tug and release on the lead and that may convince him/her. If that fails, then here is a quick checklist to go over if your llama is still being resistant. Was the load balanced properly? Are the cinches tight enough and in the correct places? Is wool being pinched anywhere on the apparatus? Is anything poking your llama in the ribs? Have you taken a break lately? Is your pack and mileage within the realm of realism? If all that is dandy, and the reluctance continues for a half hour, stop and take a nice break. Also, you may tie him/her behind another llama that is not having any

problem. If your llama SUDDENLY stops after going along just fine, be sure s/he is not trying to take a potty break.

Kushing – (the llama word for lying down w/legs tucked up underneath their bodies) – This is a more severe form of resistance (or as mentioned earlier the llama is evading a horsefly or bee). Obviously this will stop forward motion altogether. If this happens in the beginning of the day, most likely something on your checklist need to be changed (see above). After checking everything over, it is most helpful to tug and release on the lead to his/her side further and further to the rear until s/he gets up. If it seems to be rebellion and/or nothing is wrong that you can see, have someone else take all the other llamas up the trail out of her/her sight. This will mostly likely spur the llama to get up and catch up with the other llamas. If this happens near the end of the day, your llama may just be extremely tired or battling heat stress. If the weather is too hot or you have been laboring in the sun for a long period of time the latter is probably the case. In most cases, it would be very rare that any of our llamas would exhibit this behavior (with the exception of heat stress) unless something is wrong or they are exhausted. So, if you feel it is because of overexertion take a nice long break, lighten the load a little, walk at a slower pace (or a combination of these things), or camp sooner than was planned. Llamas are fairly stoic animals, so if all of our llamas are kushing on the trail at the end of each day, you need to take it easy with your pace and mileage. Remember that they are the ones carrying the heavy load up and down all those hills!

Following too closely - Some llamas have a bad habit (which is very hard to break) of tailgating you-sometimes even stepping on your heels. Find a walking stick and carry it angled towards the rear at about arms length. Wave it back and forth and this will usually keep the llama back. If s/he is trying to pass you (that is walking on the side of you instead of behind you) use the command “line out.”

CAMP TIME

When you are thinking about looking for places to camp, there are a few things to consider. An ideal spot would be some place that is sheltered and flat for your tent, and an adjacent meadow or grassy area with some sheltering trees for llamas. The closer the llamas are to you the better, but as long as you can see and hear them (even when they are kushing) it's ok. Another thing to consider is water. If you are camping near water, the llamas must be at least 200 feet away from a lake or 100 feet away from a stream. This is so their waste does not run into the lake, pond, etc. As far as the llamas drinking water in camp, it is the individuals llama's prerogative whether or not to drink. Some llamas drink very little on a camp trip and others drink a lot. You need to offer them water every night. It is usually easier to bring the water to them in the provided feed bucket where they can reach it without knocking it over (in other words at the very end of their lead). Some llamas drink at the same rate that they pee-very slowly! Also, they may be a bit insulted that the bucket does not contain grain/cookies but only water, Let them have some time with the water bucket to settle down and realize they are thirsty. You can alternate the bucket of water between all of the llamas. Give them at least a half hour with the bucket and the opportunity to drink.

Say you stopped at a stream right before you set up camp and collected some water. Now, you can give that to the llamas and it doesn't have to go through the water filter, but it ALWAYS does for you! It may look refreshing and great, but just make sure it is

filtered for your safety and well being. Always stop at stream sides and see if they would like a drink. You may be surprised that some STILL will not drink. Don't worry about this, they know their limits just be sure to offer it.

Now you know what to consider for looking for a campsite. Now here are some things to do when you actually find one.

The llamas are the first priority. Tie them somewhere shady (preferably) and take all their equipment off.

First take your picket line and attach it to whichever means you are using (tree, net of rocks, etc.). Then set up the picket how we learned in class.

Here are a few things to remember about picketing the llamas:

Make sure they cannot reach each other or get tangled in each others' tie out ropes.

Make sure there is a comfortable dry place w/in their reach to kush.

Make sure all the llamas have a visual of at least one other llama. This will comfort them.

Try not to tie them around a lot of brush or deadfall, because everything they can get tangled up in – they will.

Put them in a place where they can reach good grazing. They love going to the mountains to eat all these yummy things! However make sure they are only eating grasses or evergreens as other plants may be poisonous to them.

After all that is done, give the llamas some treats and water. They will love you for the cookies! Despite what they tell you, they are not starving to death, so ration your treats to last the whole trip.

If the bugs are bad, please apply the insecticide supplied to the llamas face and ears. Place some bug juice on a rag (balled up not flying all over the place). Dab some wherever you can, but try to get a lot of their ears. This seems to be most effective. Also put a lot on their neck. It may be helpful to have two people do this job. One person hold the lead rope or use the "relaxed position" taught in class (One hand holding loosely under the jaw – NOT GRIPPING – and the other hand holding loosely behind the ears) while the other person applies the insecticide. Most llamas don't like it, but it is for their own good.

Now it is time to get your things in order after the llamas are situated. Surely you picked this site because there is a nice level place to set up your tent. Go ahead and do that.

It is a good idea to hang the panniers and the saddles on tree branches so they are not lying on the ground. This keeps everything dry and prevents mice from chewing on the cinches. Keep the saddle pads clean. They will attract a lot of dirt and debris. We find the best place to keep them is with you under your sleeping pad or pillow. A little more insulation and padding never hurt!

It is also a good idea to have a bear safe camp set up. That means no food in your tents at anytime. Also, hang your food and garbage ten feet up and ten feet from any other tree. Ideally use a rope strung between two trees and place your food in the middle.

It is a nice idea to have your clothes that you plan to wear the next day in the tent with you. That way they are warmer and you don't have to go get them in the morning in your PJ's.

Keep a loose eye on the llamas whenever you are in camp and check on them before you go to bed. Untangle any that need untangling and make sure they are ok. Most will probably be grazing or kushed, happily chewing their cud. Check the llamas as soon as you emerge from your tent in the morning as well. Most likely everything will be fine, but it only takes a second to check.

If you stay in one camp for longer than two days you should re-stake the llamas at least once for two reasons. One, they will get more to eat, and two, this will minimize their impact on the environment.

Make sure if you hear an alarm call you go check it out.

LLAMA ON THE LOOSE!!

Having a llama get loose can be a stressful situation. However, let's start by saying DO NOT PANIC! Remember that the llama can read your body language and chemistry. Most likely our llamas will not run away unless spooked by something and they probably won't go far anyway.

Rule #1 NEVER run after or chase a loose llama. This will only cause the llama to run further away from you.

Rule #2 Determine what happened. Did s/he just get loose from the picket line? (Make certain you are tying your knots properly!) Did something scare him/her (mountain lion, bear, sheep, moose etc.)?

Rule #3 If you can see the llama approach him but go around him/her, not head on. Don't make eye contact. Act like you aren't paying attention to him. Casually step on the end of the lead line if it is still attached. If the lead/picket line is not attached take a lead line with you and COOKIES. Our llamas are little piggies and will most likely stay put or even come to you if you shake the cookie bucket. When that happens, put the lead line around the neck and after that is secured hoot it to the halter. Remember slow fluid movements. Never grab or lunge at the llama. If the halter is not on/broken, have someone go get the extra supplied halter. After the llama is secured with the lead around the neck, stand on the left side of your llama and slide your right arm around the llama's neck. Place one side of the halter in each of your hands (your right hand will be holding the strap that goes into the buckle and your left hand will be holding the buckle) making a big opening for the llama to put his/her nose through. Gently (not touching the llama's nose) slide the halter way up on the nose and buckle the crown piece to a comfortable adjustment.

Rule #4 Never lose sight of the loose llama. If someone needs to go back to camp and get something, have one person stay near the loose llama to see if s/he goes somewhere.

Rule #5 If you happen to notice that a llama is missing from camp, form a search party. Take some llamas but always leave one in camp for bait in case Mr. Missing comes back. Llamas don't like to be alone (although the one left in camp is all right in this case) so they will most likely find each other. Listen very carefully for rustling brush, humming from the lost llama and pay attention to the llamas you have with you. They will find the other llama before you will.

WHEN IN DOUBT, SHAKE THE COOKIE BUCKET AND CALL THEM BY NAME.
SPEAK SOOTHINGLY TO THEM AND TELL THEM IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT.

POISONOUS PLANTS

THIS PART OF THE BOOKLET IS VERY IMPORTANT! PLEASE STUDY THE PICTURES BELOW. THESE PLANTS ARE TOXIC TO LLAMAS. ALWAYS LOOK TO SEE WHAT THEY ARE EATING. IF IT IS ONE OF THE PLANTS PICTURED BELOW MOVE THEM TO ANOTHER AREA WHERE THERE IS NONE.

LUPINE:



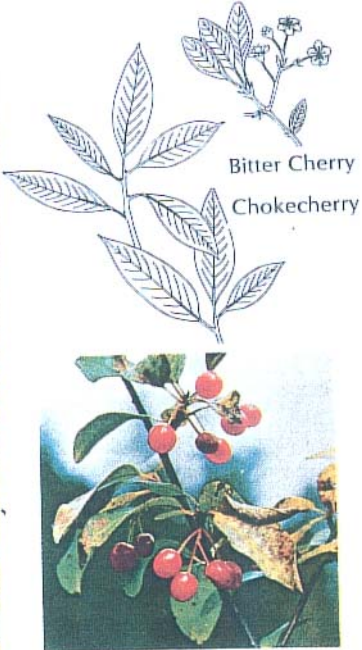
Wyeth Lupine
***Lupinus wyethii* S. Wats.**



Chokecherry



Chokecherry EDIBLE

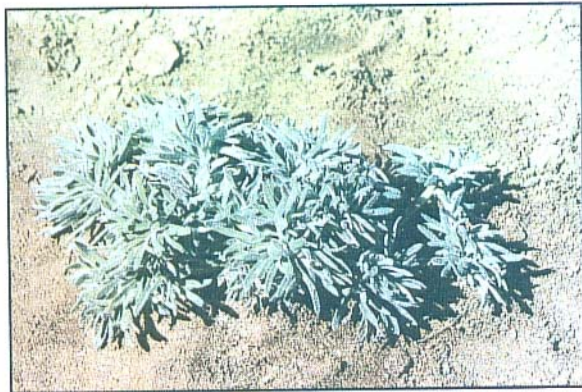
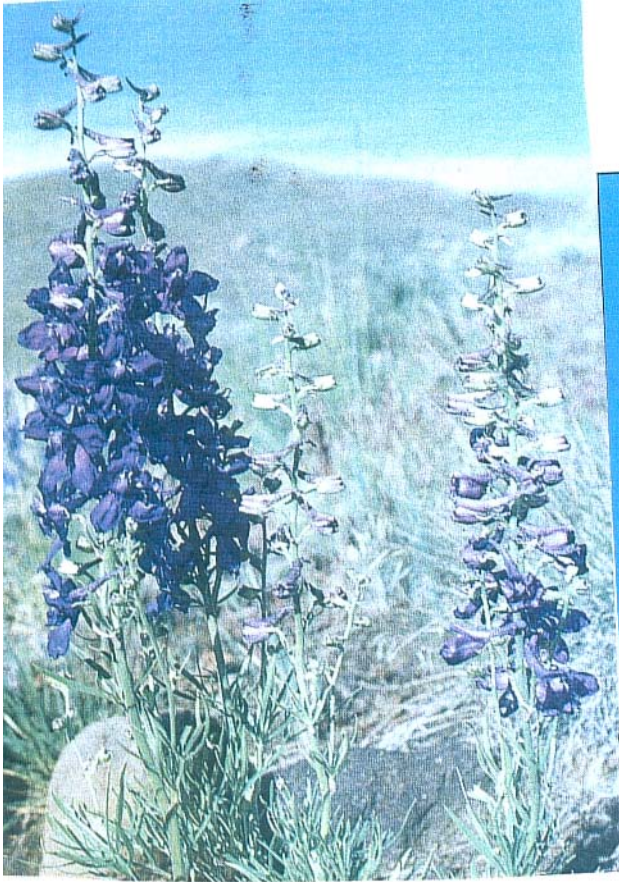


Bitter Cherry EDIBLE

WATERHEMLOCK



LARKSPUR



Remember to have fun on your trek. We care about you and the llamas and want you to have a great time! Be sure to follow all forest service rules according to the area where you will be trekking. In some cases a stock permit (free of charge) is required (Bridger wilderness).

All of this info may seem overwhelming, but you will do just fine. The llamas will thank you for taking this booklet along! Thank you for choosing Highline Trail Llamas. Have you loved a llama today?

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do not jerk on the lead and pull on your llama's head

Do not try to do a marathon with the llamas

Do not ever hit the llamas

Do not let the llamas have potty breaks during stream crossings

Do not put more than 80 pounds on any llama

Do not tie the lead llama to something while others are strung behind him or her

Do not force an obviously tired llama beyond limits

Do not chase a loose llama

Do not remove the halter

Do expect to have a relaxing wonderful time

Do attend to the llamas needs first

Do use the quick release knot for tying the llamas during breaks

Do take care when stream crossing or walking on narrow trails and lead the llamas one at a time.

Do find a place to camp that accommodates you and the llamas

Do allow the llamas to graze at least an hour per day of lush vegetation

Do check out alarm calls

Do offer the llamas water in camp

Do continually check the load, cinches and saddle to make sure they are properly positioned

Do yield to horses on the trail

Do obey all rules in your area according to the forest service

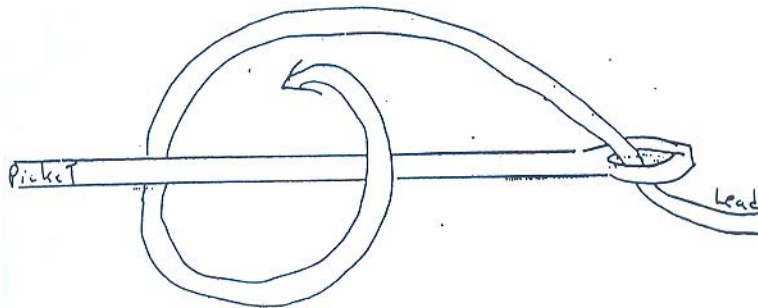
Do practice low impact camping

Do take frequent breaks for you and the llamas

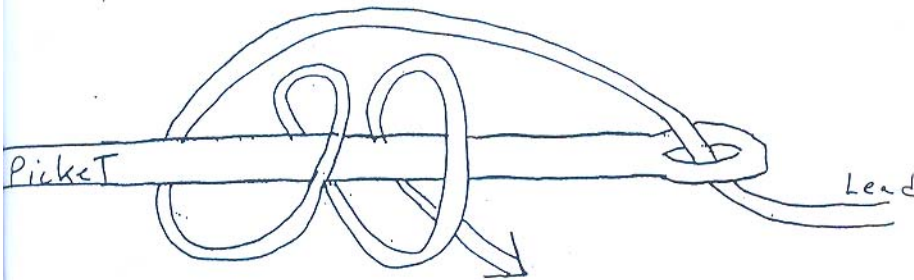
Do remember that you are responsible for the well being of the llamas and for their return

Do love your llama

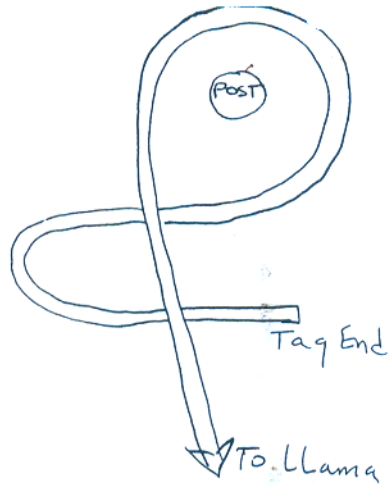
Do have a fantastic trip!!!



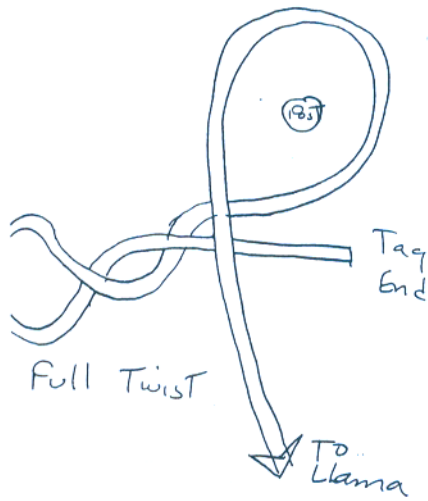
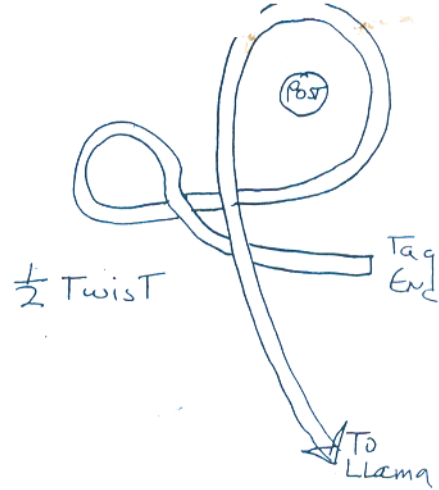
Step #1: Bring lead thru slit in end of picket, wrap lead around picket and back under itself.



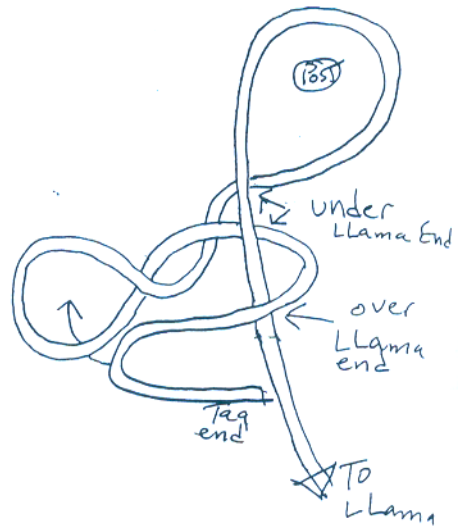
Step #2: Take a 2nd. Wrap around picket and again Under itself, pull snag.



Wrap lead around post and bring a loop under llama end.



Put a full twist (2 half turns).



Form a loop in the tag end and bring it over the llama end and up thru the bottom of the twisted loop.