

## **YMCA Camp Pepin Rails & Trails Biking Camp Summary**

Welcome to Trail Camp!

YMCA Camp Pepin believes that its camp experiences should be designed to enhance the YMCA's mission of building healthy spirit, mind, and body. It is our belief that giving campers the opportunity to participate in unique activities in the beauty of natural creation encourages them to learn new skills, accept new challenges, and develop confidence in themselves and others. It is our belief that offering experiences that are both physically and mentally challenging will help campers to grow in stature and in maturity. It is also our belief that offering a variety of activities where campers can succeed as individuals or as part of a team influences them to grow into well-rounded contributors to society.

Every Trail Camp is led by two trained and certified camp staff members, who will guide the participants in off-site activities such as canoeing, rock climbing, hiking, and biking (depending on the nature of their trip). They will also supervise them in activities that are inherent to overnight camping, such as setting up a campsite, cooking outdoors, and adopting minimum-impact camping skills. While camp staff members strive to tailor each trail experience to the skill levels of the participants, Trail Camps may pose physical and mental challenges, and participants should be prepared to accept these and to take on their reasonable share of responsibilities.

### **Overview**

Rails & Trails Biking Camp is designed as an introductory multi-night camping experience for those with either little or no mountain biking experience. The skills performed will include setting up tents, building "friendly" fires, cooking outdoors, biking on unimproved trails, and practicing "leave no trace" outdoor ethics.

### **What to Bring**

In addition to the items listed on the Bring-Along List in the *Summer Planning Guide*, please bring the extra items listed below with you (there's the possibility that you may not use all of these while on the trail, but you may regret not having them if the need arises).

- Sleeping mat (if you wish)
- 1 Pair of durable closed-toed shoes (like hiking boots) that can get wet
- 2 Pairs of wool socks
- Wool or fleece hat
- Compressible sleeping bag
- Durable rain-gear (coat and pants)
- 1 Pair of polypropylene long johns (long-sleeve top and long pants)
- Mountain bike
- Bicycle helmet

### **Arrival and Departure Times**

Trail campers should arrive at Camp Pepin on Sunday between 2:00-3:00pm (along with all of the other campers). Parents and Guardians will pick-up Trail campers and their belongings from Camp Pepin on Friday after the 4:00pm Closing Ceremony (which parents, family, and friends are invited to).

### **Accommodations**

The first night will be spent in tents at Camp Pepin's group campsite in the backwoods area. The next three nights will be spent in tents in primitive undeveloped campsites along established state biking trails in western Wisconsin (such as the Elroy-Sparta, Great River, Red Cedar, and Chippewa River State Trails). The last night will again be spent in tents in camp's group campsite.

### **Supervision**

There are 2 trail camp staff to supervise the 10 campers during the session.

**Transportation**

Trail camp staff members will drive the campers to their Trail Camp destination from camp. Participants will travel by 15-passenger vans, which undergo a thorough professional mechanical inspection prior to each summer camp season, and which undergo a written vehicular inspection prior to each excursion. Camp Pepin staff members participate in a driver training session that is specific to handling 15-passenger vans with trailers, and must demonstrate specific road skills and maneuvering competency before being added to the camp's vehicular insurance and being approved to drive a camp vehicle. All passengers are required to wear seatbelts any time their vehicle is in motion.

**Meals**

While Rails & Trails Biking campers are at Camp Pepin, their meals will be served in the Dining Hall at the regular meal times. While on the trail, the campers will be cooking their own meals from menus created by the trail camp staff and approved by the Food Service Director. Meals on the trail will minimally include a main course, at least one side of fruit or vegetables, a dessert, and a beverage in addition to water (e.g., cocoa, tea, crystallized drink mixes, etc.). Special dietary needs can often be accommodated on off-site trips if we are made aware of these in advance.

**Itinerary**

Rails & Trails Biking campers will check into Camp Pepin on Sunday. They will stay Sunday night at Camp Pepin and depart for the trail on Monday after breakfast. While on the trail, Rails & Trails Biking campers will participate in mountain biking and possibly swimming activities along established state biking trails in western Wisconsin. Their return to Camp Pepin is scheduled before dinner on Thursday. Rails & Trails Biking campers will check out from Camp Pepin on Friday.

**Inclement Weather**

If the weather becomes too severe for tent camping at Camp Pepin, campers and their staff will be allowed to sleep overnight (or until conditions improve) in the Recreation Hall for shelter. If severe weather conditions occur on the trail, campers and their staff members will follow the established severe weather guidelines and seek shelter in the location where they are camping.

**Emergency Care**

Trail camp staff are minimally certified in Red Cross First Aid, CPR, and Wilderness First Aid, and at least one Lifeguard will accompany an off-site trip involving water activities. An emergency kit and health forms will accompany all staff and campers on off-site trips. Local EMS services are available at Camp Pepin and medical facilities are available in Durand, WI, at Chippewa Valley Hospital, in Tomah, WI, at Tomah Memorial Hospital, and in Sparta, La Crosse, and Eau Claire, WI, at one of the hospitals in these communities (all within 10-20 miles of an area where the campers will be biking).