



# Wilderness

## Network of Georgia

### **WNG Environmental Impact Policy**

Enjoy what we still have of our natural heritage . . . with care.  
Our Goal: LEAVE NO TRACE!

#### **PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE**

- Know the regulations and special concerns for any area you visit.
- Visit the backcountry in small groups, rarely over 15, never over 20.
- Avoid popular areas during times of high use and keep noise levels down. Listen to the sounds of nature instead.
- Choose equipment and clothing in subdued colors (unless hunters are in the area!).
- Repackage food into reusable containers when possible, and plan to pack out any trash.

#### **ON THE TRAIL**

- Stay on designated trails. Walk single file in the middle of the path.
- Do not use the steep, shortcut paths when following a trail with switchbacks.
- When traveling cross-country, choose the most durable surfaces available.
- Do not mark trails by scarring trees, piling rocks, attaching ribbons, etc.
- Stay off sand dunes, vegetation, and other fragile terrains.
- Leave all natural features in place, and disturb no artifacts or ruins.
- Carry small trash bags and pick up at least some of the trash you see enroute.

*Continued Next Page*

## **IN CAMP**

- Try to use an established, legal site that will not be further damaged by your stay.
- When using a new site, make no alterations and leave it looking untouched.
- Limit activities to areas where vegetation is compacted or absent.
- Enjoy firestarters in dishes, candles, and candle lanterns instead of fires, but clean up any spilled wax before leaving.
- Where permitted, use existing fire rings and keep fires small. Curb any pyromaniacs!
- Gather small, dead wood from the ground only.
- If you must make a fire on a new spot, keep it very small, and scatter the cold ashes afterwards.
- Toss only paper trash in a campfire.
- Use a lightweight gas stove for most cooking.
- Avoid polluting by camping well away from water sources.
- Dry-wash pots, dishes, and utensils with leaves, dirt, sand, etc. Then swirl with an ounce of water and dry. Never wash dishes at water's edge, even without soap.
- To defecate, pick a hidden spot, well away from water and trails, dig an 8" "cat-hole," and bury everything afterwards, including any paper.

## **PACK IT OUT**

- Bring only items you absolutely need, and leave none of them behind.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing it securely. In bear country keep it high on a line strung well away from trees.
- Do not waste food. Pick up spills and discard only very small amounts of bio-degradable organic waste well out of sight.
- Patrol the area before leaving and pick up even the smallest dropped items, even cigarette butts, as well as any trash left there by others.
- Leave a cold, dead campfire with no metal, glass, or other debris in it.

*(Freely adapted from the NOLS Leave No Trace policy)*