



**CAMPER  
Handbook**



# Crex Meadows Youth Conservation Camp

P.O. Box 616, Ashland, WI 54806

1-888-780-4237

Director- Josh Kinneman

## CONGRATULATIONS!

We are so excited that you will be joining us at Crex Meadows this summer! This summer promises to be another great summer of working on great projects with the WI Department of Natural Resources (DNR), learning really neat things and lots and LOTS of fun!

All that fun starts with you and the excitement you show up to camp with. Throughout your session, we are depending on you to keep a super positive attitude, work well with your fellow campers and camp staff and maintain an awesome work ethic. Of course there will be some frustrating days but your fellow campers, *amazing* counselors and myself will be there for you to ensure that you have a positive experience from the moment you arrive to the moment you leave.

To help prepare you for camp, please read all the way through this handbook. Camp is meant to be tons of fun but we also have very high expectations for your participation. After you have read through all the sections, if you still have questions, please feel free to contact me and I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Finally, feel free to check out some of last year's pictures and start connecting with this year's campers through the Crex Meadows Youth Conservation Camp fan page on *Facebook*.

Good luck packing and we can't wait to see you at Crex!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Kinneman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Camp Director



# ELECTRONIC POLICY

## MUSIC PLAYER PRIVILEGES

You are allowed to bring your music players (iPods, MP3 players, etc.) to camp to listen to during “Tech time”. Tech time occurs twice during your session for timed sessions only. Music players must be turned in and locked up upon arrival to camp.

## CELL PHONE PRIVILEGES

Over the past few summers, the number of campers who have brought or chosen to use their own cellphones at camp has increased. In the past, our policy has been NO cellphones at camp and if found with a phone, it was confiscated and disciplinary action was taken. We firmly believe that by not having cellphones and access to *Facebook* and other social media sources, campers have the opportunity to take a break from the pressures of their social drama and focus on themselves, their experience and forming quality social bonds through face-to-face interaction with their fellow campers and camp staff. A camper’s experience at camp with limited technology, although challenging, has proven to be an extremely positive and rewarding one.

Having stated this, it has been very difficult to enforce the “no cellphone” rule at camp. Staying connected to family, friends and boyfriends/girlfriends during camp via cellphones has become a point of major contention. Considering that communication to the outside world can be a source of comfort for many of our campers, this summer, we are trying something new with cellphone privileges. If you choose to bring your phone to camp, you will be asked to turn in the phone upon your arrival. The phones will remain securely locked up until the designated cellphone time. The phones will be checked in and out for a specific amount of time. You will be allowed access to your phones a few times during the two weeks. The intention of this privilege is to enable you to check in at home, close friends or loved ones.

*If you choose to disregard the policy of turning in your cellphone at the beginning of camp, or use your cellphone in an inappropriate manner during the designated times, you will immediately be dismissed from camp and your parent/guardian will be contacted to arrange for your transportation home.*

Full-time camp staff members are required to carry a cellphone at all times for emergency purposes and are to use them at their discretion.

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*The Crex Meadows Youth Conservation Camp is not responsible for the loss or damage to a any music player, phone or other personal belongings while at camp. The use of a camper’s personal belongings by other campers is up to their discretion. A short discussion regarding music player and cellphone usage at camp will take place on the first evening with the campers. These privileges are on a trial basis and may change throughout the summer at the discretion of the camp staff.*

# What to Expect at Camp



## What happens when I arrive at camp?

The first day at camp is very exciting but can be a bit hectic. Old friends are getting reacquainted and it can be overwhelming for new campers. Everyone is excited and nervous.

When you arrive:

- Look for camp staff in their camp T-shirt with STAFF printed clearly on the back. They will welcome you and direct you to the bunk house to drop off your stuff.
- Whoever drops you off, will be directed to the mess hall to meet with the camp director to: 1) fill out the Sign-IN/Sign-Out sheet, 2) review your application, 3) update your medicine instruction form and turn in any meds you need while at camp 5) discuss any specific camp details that are necessary.
- You will get a nametag, a combination lock for your locker, raingear, a camp water bottle and t-shirt.

Once everyone arrives at camp and all the paperwork has been finalized, camp activities begin. The first night and first few days of camp will be spent working together and getting to know your fellow campers and camp staff. It can be a bit crazy but if you are nervous, don't worry you will get know everyone's name quickly and will be having fun in no time!

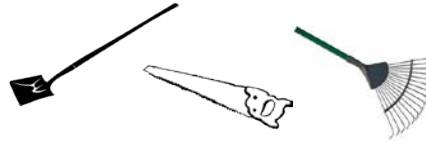
## Can I drive myself to camp?

No. Due to limited parking and liability, we cannot allow campers to drive themselves to camp, unless **prearranged** with the camp director. The keys of the vehicle will then be held by camp staff.

## Can my friends or family visit me at camp?

No. Campers are not allowed to have visitors during work hours. Exceptions will be made if arrangements are made ahead of time and the visit is absolutely necessary. This is because of the advanced scheduling of weekend outings and trips. Campers will not be on camp grounds during the weekend for visits.

# What to Expect at Camp



## What will I be doing at camp?

While at camp, you will be working hard and having fun (that's the short answer). The exacts as to what exactly will be happening daily can be summarized as such: every day we work with the WI Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) on conservation related projects in the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area, the Governor Knowles State Forest and surrounding areas, in the evenings we will all be learning and having fun as we participate in curriculum designed by the camp staff. The jobs and curriculum change daily (and sometimes at the last minute) depending on weather, equipment, supplies and unforeseen/unpredictable events. Two things you can count on though is that the work will be both physically and at times, mentally demanding and the curriculum will be hands-on and interactive.

## What is the daily schedule?

During the work week, Monday-Friday, we follow pretty much the same schedule. On the weekends, the schedule is a lot more flexible since we will be off on a multitude of adventures off property.

### Daily Schedule

6:15-6:30 AM	Wake UP
7:00 AM	Breakfast
7:30-7:50 AM	Chores
7:50-8:00 AM	Load vans & Leave For Work
8:00-4:30	Work-Lunch-Work
4:30 PM	Return to Camp & Unload vans
AFTER vans are emptied – & tools are put away	Showers
5:30 PM	Dinner
6:30 PM	Canteen/Activities
8:00 PM	Curriculum
8:15 PM	Recreation Time
9:30 PM	Bed Prep & Review the Day
10:30 PM	Bedtime



# What to Expect at Camp



## What if it rains or there are bugs?

You will be working/learning outside, in nature, almost 100% of the time. Whether its rainy, windy, hot or cold, we work. There will be bugs (ant, gnats, mosquitos, ticks, nose-ums etc.). The camp staff will do their best to remind you to bring extra gear if the weather is expected to change throughout the day but it is always a good idea to bring your raingear and an extra shirt just in case. Camp also provides sunscreen (which we expect you to wear) and bug spray if and when the bugs are bad. Camp also provides super cool head nets for those days when the gnats and mosquitoes are dive bombing your eyes.

## How do we get to and from work?

Each day campers are split into two groups and go to different locations. To get to the job sites or anywhere else that is necessary, everyone travels in camp vans. While in the vans it is required that EVERYONE wears their seatbelt (it's the law!) and remain seated the entire time. When getting in the vans, we require seats to be gender specific (boys in one row, girls in another) and expect everyone to keep their hands to themselves! We do not allow any sort of horsing around in the vans. It is very distracting to and dangerous to the driver. Think of each van ride as a time to relax, enjoy the scenery, listen to music or chat quietly with the new friends you have made at camp. Camp enrollees (included junior counselors) are not allowed to use any camp vehicles.

## What should I wear at camp?

Camp is a place for old clothes and/or clothes you don't mind getting dirty. During the work day, campers must wear work boots, gloves, long pants and a shirt (long-sleeved or short depending on the weather conditions). After work and on the weekends, campers may wear regular "play clothes" as long as they are camp appropriate. For your safety, always wear footwear while at camp and participating in camp related activities. **Please DO NOT bring bikini swimsuits, short-shorts, tank tops, tube tops, midriff shirts, sleeveless shirts, "muscle shirts" and offensive t-shirts or caps.** See the packing list for details. *Crex Camp does not take responsibility for clothing or other personal items that may be damaged, lost, or stolen.*

## What if I get hurt at camp?

The director and full-time counselors are all medically certified to care for you at camp. Our goal is to keep you happy and healthy the entire time however, because of the type work we do, an occasional band aide or other minor medical assistance is required. We ask that you make wise decisions throughout the day to ensure your safety as well. If you are not feeling well or need any sort of medical attention, tell a counselor or the director immediately! They will do an assessment and offer the care they feel is best for you.



# What to Expect at Camp



## What happens on the weekends?

Each weekend a few fun activities are planned off property in the surrounding area. Each session will be a bit different but you can count on tent camping and roasting marshmallows on each trip. The actual destination and activities for each session will be revealed during the first week of camp.

## What will I eat at camp?

You will have three delicious meals prepared daily for you. Breakfast and dinner will be hot meals while lunches are brown-bag style with a sandwich, chips, fruit and a snack bar. The camp cook does her best to offer meals that are both filling and that everyone will like. During your time at camp, you will be expending a lot of energy and it is very important that you eat three full meals to stay strong and healthy for the full two weeks.

## Where will I sleep?

There are two bunkhouses at camp, one for the boys and one for the girls. Each camper has a single bed, as part of a bunk bed set and a locker in the bunkhouse for their stuff. A total of 10-12 campers will be assigned to each bunkhouse along with one Counselor and one Junior Counselor. Campers are expected to sleep head-to-foot (top bunk head on the left, bottom bunk, head on the right) as per health code regulations. The camp prefers that each camper brings their own linens (sheets, blanket and pillow). A sleeping bag may be used as a blanket but does not take the place of sheets (health code regulation).

## Can I have my cellphone or music player at camp?

Yes and no. You may bring your phone to camp but we require you to turn it in upon your arrival. You will have access to your phone a few times during your session to contact friends and family. For cellphone privilege details, see the Cellphone Privileges section at the beginning of the handbook. *If you choose to disregard the cellphone policy, you will be sent home. Again, the camp is not responsible for the loss or any damage of any electronic that you decide to bring to camp.*



# Camp Details



## When will I get paid?

You will receive one paycheck covering both weeks of your work experience. The check will be mailed to your house unless your parent/guardian has designated otherwise. The check should be received approximately a week after you return home from camp.

## Can I send or receive mail at camp?

Yes. Mail is delivered daily to the camp however, it often takes some time for letters to reach the camp so if you know someone has sent you something don't worry, it will get there. If you would like to send letters while at camp, we sell envelopes and stamps and will help you send the mail when you are ready.

Letters may be sent to the following address:

*Camper's full name*  
*Crex Meadows Conservation Camp*  
*102 East Crex Avenue*  
*Grantsburg, WI 54840*

## Do I need money at camp?

It is not mandatory for you to bring money. However, you have the option to purchase one soda and one candy bar or snack each evening during "Canteen." Sodas and snacks each cost about 50 cents. You will also have the chance to stop at a convenience store before the weekend trip and are allowed to purchase a few items to take with. Finally, you are encouraged to wash your laundry after the first week at camp. *You are responsible for monitoring your personal funds and camp is not responsible for lost or stolen money.*

## What is NOT allowed at camp?

#1: Swearing and any/all vulgar, obscene, offensive words or gestures are not allowed at camp. We expect you to treat this experience as an opportunity to practice your professionalism. Camp is a place of hard work and fun but also a place to practice respecting those around you. We expect you to treat other campers as you would like to be treated. *Disciplinary action will be taken if you are unable to control your language and gestures.* See the Important Policies section for guidelines and expectations.

#2: **Weapons of any kind, tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs are absolutely not allowed at camp.** Do NOT bring them with you! *Campers that possess these items will be sent home.* Fireworks, decorative lights, walkie-talkies, lighters, matches, pocket knives computers or other electronic equipment are also not allowed at camp. See the music player and cellphone privileges for exceptions.

#3: A negative attitude. Leave your sassy pants at home!





# Daily Expectations



## **In the bunkhouse**

Before leaving the bunkhouse for breakfast in the morning, you are expected to make your bed, lock all personal items in your locker and place and straighten any additional items under your bed or under the lockers. Wash cloths and towels (and any wet/dirty/stinky clothes and shoes) should be put outside on the clothesline if it is not going to rain. If rain is in the forecast, towels and wet laundry are expected to be neatly hung on bunk beds.

## **Meals**

Being on-time to meals is essential! Campers are not allowed in the mess hall (unless they have been assigned to assist the camp cook) until the meal is ready. Once invited in, everyone will sit at the table as a few announcements are made. Then, it's food time. After the meal, everyone is expected to wash and sanitize their own dishes. After their dishes are done, campers may leave the dining hall and are encouraged to hangout on the picnic tables outside the mess hall but may not go back to the bunkhouse.

## **Chores**

Campers are assigned daily chores that they will do after breakfast, prior to leaving for the work day. The chores are on a rotating schedule and include the following: cleaning the bathrooms, showers, bunkhouses, dining hall, kitchen, camp grounds, loading the vans with equipment for the day, taking out garbage, recycling and compost and assisting the camp cook. Junior counselors and counselors will be around during chores to ensure the jobs are being done well and to assist you if you have any questions or need an extra hand.

## **At work**

Camp is a place of fun, even during the work day however it is also very demanding. During the daily projects, each camper is expected to dress appropriately (long pants, work gloves and boots, and a t-shirt/long-sleeved shirt), follow the tool operation guidelines, work well with their fellow campers and camp staff, maintain a good work ethic and drink LOTS of water! Even if the day gets long, the weather is crummy, the mosquitoes are biting, the job is exhausting or you're simply having a bad day, we expect you to work hard. The work (and the rewards you get from working) is one of the main reasons you came to camp so we expect you to work hard the full two weeks.

## **Curriculum**

After dinner, a fun and educational activity will be planned. Every camper is expected to participate and participate with enthusiasm. You will only get out of each activity, what you put in when it comes to both work and the curriculum presented. Many schools may give credit for attending Crex Meadows. Please check with the Camp Director or your school guidance counselor for more information.

## **Public Relations**

While at camp, you are representing both the integrity of the camp and CEP, Inc. (you are a CEP, Inc. employee while at camp). Both staff and campers are expected to act friendly and courteously to the public.



# Important Policies



## **Equipment Damage**

Campers who intentionally damage camp equipment or tools will have the cost of the repair/replacement taken from their final paycheck. Breakage due to normal wear and tear is an exception. Any incident must be recorded on a tool damage report and be approved by the camp director before disciplinary action is taken.

## **Transgender Policy**

Crex Meadows Youth Conservation Camp is an equal opportunity employer. In regards to transgender individuals, Crex Meadows Youth Conservation Camp is dedicated to making camp a safe, positive experience of all individuals, regardless of sex orientation, and will determine the best practice based on case by case basis.

## **Dating**

Dating among campers is not allowed. While personal growth and relationships are a part of the camp experience, CEP, Inc. recognizes a time and place for such activities. Campers who choose to pursue a relationship while at camp will be asked to refrain for the duration of camp or return home. Intimate gestures of any kind will not be tolerated.

## **Harassment**

Crex Meadows recognizes that a person's right to freedom from discrimination includes the opportunity to work or study in an environment untainted by harassment. Offensive speech and conduct are wholly inappropriate and intolerable to the harmonious relationships necessary for the operations of the camp program. Harassment has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment and may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work performance, which could adversely affect an individual's employment opportunity.

Harassment includes all unwelcome advances, written or verbal innuendos, threats, insults, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's gender, national origin, race, creed, color, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or religious beliefs that are offensive to a person associated with the camp program. Examples include verbal harassment (epithets, derogatory comments, demeaning jokes, slurs, threats, etc.), physical harassment (assault, unnecessary touching, impeding or blocking movement, physical interference with normal work or movement, etc.), and visual harassment (derogatory or demeaning posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, gestures, etc.).

## **Sexual Harassment**

In addition to the above, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment AND/OR submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is the basis for or a factor in any employment decision affecting the individual.

Any camper who has a question or concern regarding any type of discrimination or harassment is encouraged to promptly bring it to the attention of their immediate supervisor or the camp director. Any individual who is found to have harassed another individual, will be subject to discipline. Persons that have been exposed to harassment are encouraged to report the harassment to an appropriate supervisor. Supervisors that become aware of unlawful harassment or inappropriate behavior must report the incident to the camp director.



# Packing List



## Linens and Personal Items

- Bath towel
- Swimming towel
- Wash cloth
- Soap
- Shampoo/ Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Comb or brush
- Toothbrush/ Toothpaste
- A positive attitude (required)
- Pillow
- Sleeping bag and linens
- Laundry bag

## Clothing

- Swimming suit (camp appropriate)
- 12 pairs of socks, including some high enough for boots
- 3 pairs of shorts
- 3 pairs of work jeans/ pants (they WILL get dirty)
- 2 pair of jeans/ pants for non-work hours
- 7 lightweight shirts (bring at least 4 for working in)
- Sweatshirt /Jacket
- A sense of humor
- Pajamas
- A hat
- 1-2 Tennis shoes/comfortable walking shoes
- Flip flops or sandals

## Other IMPORTANT Items

- Special medications (prescriptions must be turned in at start of camp)
- A desire to learn!
- Pocket money for laundry, canteen and convenience store items (at least \$15.00)

## Optional Items

- Stamps\*, envelopes\* and stationary
- Rain gear\*
- Camera
- Flashlight\* (\*available at camp)

**Please DO NOT** pack bikini swimsuits, short-shorts, tank tops, tube tops, midriff shirts, sleeveless shirts, “muscle shirts” and offensive t-shirts or caps.

## DO NOT BRING

- ✓ **Tobacco, alcohol, or other non-prescription drugs**
- ✓ **Weapons of any kind**
- ✓ **Gameboys, PSP’s, computers etc.**

**\*\*\*If these items are in a camper’s possession during camp, confiscation and disciplinary action will be taken.\*\*\***

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**Camp provides each camper with the following work equipment/gear upon their arrival:**

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Work Boots</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Leather work gloves</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Water bottle</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Rain gear**</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Safety glasses**</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Combination locks**</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Insect repellent and sunscreen is available at camp. If a specific type or brand is required, please pack it.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>**These items must be returned at the end of each session.</b></p> |
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**\*\*\*Cellphones and personal music players (iPods, MP3 players etc.) are allowed at camp however, they will be locked up upon arrival for use during tech time. (see the cellphone and music player privileges description at the beginning of the handbook). The camp is not responsible for loss or damage that may occur to any personal belongings.\*\*\***

