

2026 AMEN backpacking trip

Trip plan: Leave Thursday morning, Oct. 8 around 9:30am. We will have lunch break in Buckhannon or Elkins. Figure on at least a five-hour drive total so bring something to read, or a game if you don't like staring out the window. When we arrive, we'll back-pack to campsite and set up camp. Friday: Leave our tents and dayhike. Saturday: Pack up early, hike out. Head home and arrive back early evening.

Sundew Trail to Raven Ridge: 2.4 miles This easy to intermediate trail features many gorgeous plants, including wildflowers and fruit shrubs. Sundew Trail is accessible year-round, making it a great hike for fall foliage viewing and summer hikes. Dogs are welcome but must be leashed. With little elevation and limited hiking hazards, this Dolly Sods hike is great for families. The trail connects with Raven Ridge Trail and Dobbin Grade Trail. There is a water crossing and a steep section. We will only be on Raven Ridge for less than .25 miles. We want to get to camp with plenty of time to set-up before sunset approx. 7:00pm

Saturday dayhike large 5.6 mile loop: We'll pack a lunch and water, leave our tents and take a leisurely hike along Raven Ridge trail to the edge of the sods where we will meet with Rocky Ridge trail. This trail is a little more technical with some minor rock scrambles and will also have breath taking views of the Cannan Valley. We will work our way south for about 1.7 mile to meet up with Dobbin Grade. This trail will most likely be muddy so be prepared. After 1.6 miles we will take Beaver View trail back north to camp. This trail is where we will regain our elevation. There will be a few creek crossings on this loop. Bring extra socks.

Clothing: A complete change of clothes really won't be needed for on the trail. Clean, dry change of clothes and shoes should be left in the vehicles for when we get back. Think of clothing that can be layered and be added or removed as the weather changes. Expect very cool temperatures in the evenings and morning, becoming warm at mid-day. We should always be prepared for rainy weather.

Things to carry: We'll want to travel very light. Think small ... usually the smaller, the better. A load may not seem heavy starting out, but can become wearisome after a while. Large plastic garbage bags can be used as emergency ponchos, sleeping bag covers, a dry seat, cover for items left outside the tent at night, and dirty clothes bag after returning to vehicles. Everyone will carry a whistle with them at all times. If anyone gets separated, or lost or injured, this can be used as a signal to help us find you. You'll want to carry some water, but we should have an ample supply at the campsite. Bugs and mosquitoes have not been a problem this late in the year.

Tents: We'll find out how many people are going and then decide on how many tents we'll need. We can take turns carrying the tents in and out during the trip or divide up poles, tents and stakes to share the load. Plan on sharing a tent with one or two others.

Backpacking food

Dinner: Freeze-dried food can be purchased at Dick's Sporting Goods and are a good choice. This type of food can become expensive if somebody plans to purchase enough for several meals, but for one dinner, it's hard to beat the light weight and convenience. This type of meal is usually prepared by just adding boiling water and allowing the package to sit for a few minutes to rehydrate. Then, just eat out of the package with a spoon. If you're tired and hungry towards the end of the day, it's nice to have a meal that's quick and easy to prepare. Other food options are MREs (packaged military rations), instant soup, Raman noodles, Triscuit crackers, pita bread, cheese, dried fruit, beef jerky and pouches of tuna or chicken packed in water. Since this is a short trip, you can probably carry fresh carrot sticks or some other vegetable. Powdered lemonade or sport drink can perk up plain water. Keep in mind that we will probably have to share backpacking stoves with the whole group, so look for instant meals that just need boiling water and avoid things that have to be cooked for a while. Try to stay away from canned food — it's very heavy. Remember, each one of us must carry out our own trash — wrappers, packaging, etc. "Pack it in — pack it out."

Breakfast: Instant oatmeal, Pop-Tarts, dry cereal, powdered milk, bagels, dried fruit, granola bars, instant hot cocoa pouches, tea bags, etc. The powdered eggs have not been very popular with our group.

Snacks: This is something to eat between meals to keep from getting hungry. Granola bars, hard candy, peanut butter and crackers, etc. Think of items that will hold up and not get crushed in a pack. Chocolate may melt in warm weather and be messy. Gorp is a backpacker's snack — sometimes pack-aged and called trail mix. Save money and make it at home from your choice of a mixture of peanuts, sunflower seeds, chocolate chips or M&Ms, raisins, banana chips, pretzel nubs, dry cereal, shredded coconut, Goldfish crackers, etc. Use whatever ingredients you like and mix them all together in pack them in quart-sized a zip-lock bag. This should be more than enough for a weekend — maybe even too much. Eat a handful whenever you get the urge to snack.

Water: Backpackers will find they need water for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, bathing and washing dishes. An extra water container can be carried empty and filled after reaching camp. We will be camp-ing near to a good water source. Normally, all water should be treated or filtered before drinking. We will have a squeeze-style filter.

Nutrition: On a weekend trip, nutrition isn't a major concern if a person normally eats balanced meals. Carbohydrates and fats supply energy and we'll be burning some calories as we hike. The most import-ant thing is to drink plenty of water.

Other meals: We will plan to make a brief stop for takeout food somewhere on the way up. We will also plan on having a cooler in the vehicle that stuff can be stored in. We usually have a picnic-style lunch on Sunday after leaving the woods.

Bears: I have never been very concerned about meeting bears. On my trip to scout out the trails, I did see a small-to-medium-sized one. Bears in this area are generally frightened of people. I think because I was moving quietly, I was able to sneak up on it. I suspect a group walking through the woods will be noisier than a solo hiker and we probably won't meet any. If you should encounter a bear, don't run ... stop and slowly back away from it. We may practice some bear-prevention techniques around our campsite and tie up any food we leave behind during our dayhike. We will be hanging bear bags.

Everyone must have:

- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Warm sleeping bag
- ☐ Sleeping pad
- ☐ 1-quart water bottle/canteen
- ☐ Poncho or other lightweight rain gear
- ☐ Outer windproof shell jacket
- ☐ Sweatshirt, sweater, fleece jacket, or liner
- ☐ Base layer clothes
- ☐ Toilet paper (personal supply in a ziplock bag)
- ☐ Pack Cover
- ☐ Small flashlight (with fresh batteries)
- ☐ Prescription medications (if needed)
- ☐ Food for meals, snacking
- ☐ Small plastic bag for trash (bread bag works)
- ☐ Backpack (40L-65L)
- ☐ Backpacking tent/Shelter (We can discuss sleeping arrangements.)
- ☐ Small Trowel
- ☐ Boots/Hiking Shoes

Highly recommended:

- ☐ Dry bags
- ☐ Hand towel
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Plastic bowl, mug, spoon
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Hiking staff (for better balance with a pack)
- ☐ Change of socks
- ☐ Bandanna (could double as washcloth/towel)
- ☐ Glove/mittens
- ☐ Ride home Clothes (leave in Car)
- ☐ Wool Socks
- ☐ Change of underwear

Optional items**(more comfort, but more to carry):**

- ☐ Shorts
- ☐ large plastic garbage bags
- ☐ Towelettes (a few WetOnes in a ziplock bag)
- ☐ Talcum powder (small container or ziplock bag)
- ☐ Sunscreen/sunglasses
- ☐ Bug spray (small squeeze bottle or wipes)
- ☐ Deodorant/personal hygiene items
- ☐ Camera (carry in a ziplock bag)
- ☐ Wristwatch
- ☐ camp shoes
- ☐ portable charger
- ☐ camp chair/sit pad
- ☐ Journal and pen
- ☐ Chapstick
- ☐ Toboggan
- ☐ Multi-tool

Items adults will have to share with all:

- ☐ First-aid kit
- ☐ Water filter
- ☐ Camp stove/fuel
- ☐ Coffee pot for heating water
- ☐ Backpacker's soap
- ☐ Bug spray (small squeeze bottle)
- ☐ GPS
- ☐ Fire Starter
- ☐ Compass and Map

Things you'll not need:

- ☐ Multiple sets of clothes
- ☐ extra pair of hiking shoes
- ☐ cologne
- ☐ Glass containers (heavy and could be broken)