**PURPOSE:** This badge demonstrates that the handler and dog are prepared for primitive camping and can survive at least 1 night out on the trail. This badge should NEVER be completed by a single handler alone. At least 1 other person should accompany the handler/dog team. Additionally, others should know exactly where the team will be hiking and camping and when they plan to return. These individuals should begin a search and send help if the handler team doesn’t return as planned. The badge requires both human and dog to travel under a loaded pack, and both must be physically fit for the circumstances before starting out.

**DOG REQUIREMENTS:** The dog must have earned the prerequisite Backpacking badge before attempting to earn this one. The dog must have excellent trail manners, walk close to the handler on a loose leash when hiking and must never chase or harass wildlife on the trail or at the campsite. The dog must wear a pack containing the required items at a minimum. All but the tiniest dog should be able to add a few things to the pack including a meal or two and some treats.

**HANDLER REQUIREMENTS:** The handler must be prepared for primitive camping, not camping at a prepared campsite. This means there should be no electrical hookups, no plumbed water, no porta-potties or plumbed bathroom facilities, etc. Handler should be able to find a spot suitable for camping. The area should be relatively level and not in a flood zone. Additionally, the area should not be at risk for heavy deadfall, rockslides, mudslides, etc. or be located in a patch of poisonous plants or in a likely habitat for poisonous snakes or spiders, or ground bees, fire ants, etc.

The handler needs to practice responsible dog parenting. The dog’s waste must be picked up and packed out and the dog must be secured at night if a tent is not used so that he does not wander off while the handler is sleeping. A shelter is required but it does not have to be an enclosed or commercially purchased tent. The handler needs to be able to select appropriate equipment for the situation and have the skill to not get lost in the woods or find his/her way to safety if getting lost cannot be prevented.

The handler must be able to build a fire using a standard match and must find tinder, kindling and fuel for the fire in the area where camping. Handler must understand what a ‘cat hole’ is, why and how to use it, and must understand what items, both food and non-food, that are likely to attract bears and other wildlife and how to properly hang a bear bag to keep these items out of reach.

**EQUIPMENT NEEDED**: In addition to the supplies listed on the packing list and carried in the dog’s pack, the handler must find and appropriate trail, where primitive camping and campfires are allowed. All needed supplies must be packed in and out. A trailer, wagon or cart may be pulled by a person or dog if needed to transport food and cooking items, or items may be split up among members of a group to be carried.

**PROCESS:** An evaluator will be present when overnight camping. Each dog/handler team will be evaluated on the trail when hiking out, at the campsite area, and on the return hike. Each handler must demonstrate gathering tinder, kindling and fuel and starting a fire. Each must locate a proper place for hanging a bear bag and demonstrate how it should be hung. Handlers may be questioned, and the answers provided used to satisfy some of the other requirements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ALLOWED: | NOT ALLOWED: |
| * Tents or non-enclosed shelters
 | * Established campsite areas
 |
| * 2 campers, small or large groups
 | * Hiking/Camping in non-dog areas
 |
| * Snack or meal cooked over the fire
 | * Using a lighter to start a fire
 |
|  | * Attempting to earn this badge without a partner
 |
|  | * Any rough handling of the dog
 |
|  | * Any behavior that does not follow ‘leave no trace’ principles
 |