

YMCA OF THE EAST BAY

CAMP RAVENCLIFF HANDBOOK

YMCA Camp Ravencliff is located in the heart of redwood country approximately 200 miles north of San Francisco. The camp occupies a beautiful meadow and wooded hillside on the banks of the Eel River near the small town of Redway. Partially bordering on Humboldt Redwoods State Park, with access to groves of towering ancient redwoods, Ravencliff's unique setting gives it a feeling of serene isolation, yet the camp is conveniently close to town services in Redway and nearby Garberville, including two major grocery stores, restaurants, shops, and a hospital with a 24-hour emergency.

YMCA Camp Ravencliff can accommodate 90 campers and an adult staff of 22-24 in rustic cabins. The main lodge has a fully-equipped kitchen, and other program facilities support a wide range of camp activities, including a beautiful waterfront for swimming and boating, hiking, back-country camping, arts and crafts, and campfire programs. See the "Facilities" section for more details.

HISTORY

Archaeological studies have established that the hillside Camp Ravencliff now occupies has been inhabited by human beings for at least 4,000 years. At least two major groups of Native Americans used the site as a winter village to which they returned year after year. Sadly, the most recent Native group, a band of Sinkyone people were massacred by a militia of settlers in the 1860's, in nearby Whittemore Grove.

The Sinkyone called their village "To-che-be" (pronounced "Toe-chay-bay"). The name "Sinkyone" (pronounced "Sin-kee-oh-nee") comes from their name for the South Fork of the Eel River, "Sin-ke-kok." They named the cliffs on the opposite river bank "Bus-ke-nes" (pronounced "Boosh-ka-nesS"), meaning "talking cliffs," because of the remarkably loud and distinct echo, which many Ravencliff campers have experienced for themselves. Traces of the Sinkyone occupation can be seen around camp, most notably the round mortar holes in the sandstone outcroppings near the lodge, where acorns were ground into meal.

Settlers in the area supported their families by farming, ranching, and logging, and established many small towns along the river, including Redway and Garberville. In the 1930's, the YMCA in Eureka, the county seat, purchased four acres on the west bank of the Eel River near Redway and established Camp Ravencliff. Some of the camp buildings date from that era. The original cabins and shower house were located close to the river, and were washed away in the 1964 flood. During that flood, the raging waters tore the deck off the lodger and water inside the lodge was a foot deep.

In the 1960's, the Richmond YMCA acquired Ravencliff from the Eureka YMCA, and also purchased an additional 60 acres of surrounding meadow and woodland from local owners. With consolidation, ownership of Ravencliff has passed to the YMCA of the East Bay. In 1964 the Redway Community Services District purchased some acreage to the north and west of camp as part of its wastewater treatment facility. The southern camp boundary is shared with Humboldt Redwoods State Park.

For over 60 years, thousands of children, teenagers and adults have been touched by "Ravencliff magic." An unusual number of Ravencliffers have returned summer after summer, first as campers, then counselors, and then as alumni contributing time and energy to upkeep and improvement of the camp. Local schools, youth groups and adult groups in Humboldt County have also come to Ravencliff for campouts and conferences. By offering rental of the camp to a wide variety of youth and community groups, the YMCA of the East Bay hopes to give a new generation of campers the opportunity to share fun, friendship, skills-bulling, and personal growth at Camp Ravencliff.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Facilities at Ravencliff, described in detail in the next section, are simple and rustic. The heart of life at Ravencliff is a growing awareness and appreciation of the outdoors. Ravencliff is best used for outdoor activities such as hiking, swimming, boating, nature study, campcraft skills, sports and games, arts and crafts using local materials, and campfire programs.

A word about the weather: A "typical" year in southern Humboldt County includes a mild spring with some rain, a hot dry summer, a warm dry fall with some rain possible, and a very wet, cold winter. In some recent years, heavy rain and occasional cold spells have continued into May. Please be aware that there is no heat in any of the buildings. In the summer, and often well into the fall, the days can be quite hot, especially since the buildings and games field are in an open meadow. Luckily, Ravencliff boasts one of the finest natural swimming holes in the area and boating equipment is available at camp. Summer evenings are usually pleasantly cool, and it does not get completely dark until almost nine o' clock.

PLANNING YOUR STAY AT CAMP RAVENCLIFF

For further information and reservations: Call Bria Cartwright at the Hilltop Family YMCA (510) 222-9622, during regular business hours. She will discuss dates available at Ravencliff and will explain the fee schedule. If, after reading this handbook, you would like more detail on accommodations and facilities, you may call the Ravencliff caretaker, Kim Cabrera, Kim can be reached at (707) 923-1273 in the evenings. Let Bria know when you are ready to make a reservation. You will be required to sign a contract, make a deposit and provide insurance .

Advance Party: If this is your group's first trip to Camp Ravencliff, or if you are bringing a large group, we recommend that an "advance party" of 1-3 of your group leaders visit Ravencliff well in advance of your stay, to see the camp and plan your program. Check with Bria for an available day, and then call Kim to arrange a convenient time to meet.

Staff Orientation

A staff orientation will be required of all groups prior to the arrival of their campers. The caretaker will take staff on a tour of camp, pointing out the boundaries. Other topics will include emergency procedures and services, preparation for fire drill, an inventory of the equipment your group will be using, which the camp director will be required to sign; and instructions on how to use the kitchen and other facilities.

We recommend that your entire staff be at camp for this orientation the day before the campers arrive. Once the children are in camp, the staff will undoubtedly be giving them their complete attention and will be unable to fully participate in the orientation. When making your plans, please include enough time for the orientation and reserve an extra day if needed. Talk to the caretaker before you arrive to set up a time for the orientation.

Staffing Requirements

Groups must have at least one adult leader for every nine campers under 18 years of age. At least one leader must bunk in each cabin where campers are staying.

Every group is required to have, at minimum, one leader with a current first aid certificate on duty at all times. Groups of more than 50 or who are staying more than 4 days are required to have a live-in nurse.

If your group will be using the waterfront, you must have at least one lifeguard with a Lifeguard Training, First Aid and CPR for the Professional rescuer certificate on duty while campers are in the water. Copies of these certifications must be sent or faxed to the Hilltop YMCA prior to your stay.

If you hire a cook or kitchen workers for your group, they must be properly certified. Check with the Humboldt County Department of Public Health (707) 445-6215.

What to Bring

Groups need to bring all their own food, but the kitchen has equipment, cooking utensils, dishes, and silverware. You will need to bring toilet paper, paper towels, and paper napkins, and soap for personal use. Groups also need to bring program materials such as arts and crafts supplies, sports equipment, etc.

Individuals need to bring sleeping bags or sheets and blankets, and pillows, washcloths and towels; appropriate clothing for the season, swimsuits; toothpaste and toothbrush, soap, shampoo, flashlights or battery-powered lanterns (fuel-burning devices are not permitted in camp, due to state fire laws -- please see the "Fire Safety" section), and any other personal items they will need during their stay .

Groups are discouraged from bringing electronic equipment to camp. Electricity in camp is minimal, serving the kitchen, bathrooms, nurse's cabin, headquarters, and the arts and crafts cabin. Groups are also urged to bring a minimum number of vehicles necessary and to drive to only when necessary to buy supplies or deal with emergencies. Please read the "Good Neighbor" and "Access to Camp/Road Use" sections below for more details.

FACILITIES

Cabins and Bathrooms

Camp Ravencliff has accommodations for up to 90 campers and 10 adult staff in 10 cabins, with room for approximately 12-14 more adult staff (including a live-in nurse) in smaller cabins. Cabins are fully enclosed but they are unheated and without electricity. Bunks and mattresses are provided, but you will need to bring bedding or sleeping bags including pillows. For light, please bring flashlights and battery-powered lanterns only. Fuel-burning lanterns are not permitted in camp (see the "Fire Safety" section).

Toilet and shower facilities, separated into boys' and girls' sections, are centrally located near the cabins.

Lodge and Kitchen

The main lodge includes a kitchen with walk-in cooler and refrigerators, commercial-sized gas stove and ovens, food preparation utensils, and a separate dishwashing room with an automatic dishwasher and sanitizer and enough plates, bowls, cups and silverware for a full camp. Tables and seating are provided, and can be set up inside the lodge or on the screened porch in warm weather.

Groups will need to bring their own food and arrange for food preparation. All cooks and food preparers you hire must be properly certified.

Headquarters

The Headquarters cabin is located next to the lodge and provides office space for the camp director. An additional room with a wood stove can be used as a bedroom for two staff members, but there is no bathroom or water in this cabin.

Phone

There is a dedicated phone line at Camp Ravencliff which you are welcome to use. Phone charges for the duration of your stay will be included with your final invoice.

Nurse's Cabin/Infirmary

The nurse's cabin and infirmary is a separate cabin with accommodations for a live-in nurse, a bathroom with shower, a treatment room, and three infirmary bunks.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT PLUMBING AND ELECTRICITY

Please note that Camp Ravencliff's facilities are old and very fragile. It is vital that all groups use care with the plumbing and electrical systems. **NOTHING** should be flushed down toilets except toilet paper. Anything else can jam the pumps and may result in shutdown of the entire water system for your group. Please share and enforce this with your campers. This has happened for the past 2 years and presents a very difficult challenge for your group if it occurs. Dishes should be scraped CLEAN before washing as this can also clog the system. No grease or fat is to be put down the sinks or any drains. With regard to electricity, our power source fluctuates. Do not use more electricity that you absolutely need and under no circumstances should you overload the plugs or circuits. Your cooperation is appreciated by your campers and the groups that follow you.

ACTIVITIES

Camp Ravencliff provides the ideal setting for outdoor awareness experiences such as nature study, hiking, environmental education, and learning camping and survival skills. The camp's 60 acres include a variety of terrain, from the river and riverbank to the meadow, oak woods, and conifer forest on the upper hillside. Opportunities abound for wildlife observations, and the large meadow makes a splendid "observatory" for stargazers. Ravencliff's Native heritage offers a unique chance for campers to learn about the original inhabitants, and how to translate their skills and knowledge to twenty-first century stewardship of the earth.

Additionally, Humboldt Redwoods State Park and other nearby facilities offer recreational and educational opportunities within a short drive from Ravencliff. The State Park, which includes many different sites in the southern Humboldt area, including Whittemore Grove adjoining Ravencliff, has a network of hiking and biking trails, picnic areas, swimming beaches and launch areas for canoes and kayaks, and excellent interpretive resources for nature study and local history. See the "Source" section of this handbook for details.

Waterfront

A large, cool swimming hole on the Eel River, beneath the "talking cliffs," with a long beach, makes Ravencliff's waterfront truly spectacular. In addition to swimming and water games, campers can enjoy paddling the canoes and boats provided (life jackets and lifesaving equipment are included). All groups using the waterfront must have a lifeguard on duty for every 25 swimmers whenever using the waterfront. Additionally, Ravencliff campers, staff and volunteers are not allowed to jump from the cliff during their stay at Ravencliff. Please refer to "Staffing" and "Health and Safety" sections for detailed requirements.

Back Country Camping

Above the meadow and games field is Ravencliff's "back country," a forested area where groups can tent-camp or sleep outdoors in designated places. Campfires may be built in the developed fire circles, so campers can make simple hot meals and enjoy songs, skits and games at night.

Sports and Games

The large field above the cabins can be used for sports and games. A court for volleyball or basketball and a baseball diamond are located at the top of the meadow near the road. Because of the archaeological sensitivity of the area, which is part of the ancient Native village site, and a utility easement, a natural surface is maintained in the meadow. Further leveling and clearing of the area are not permitted.

An archery range can be set up on the upper side of the road across from the volleyball/basketball area. If your group is interested in archery, please talk to the caretaker before you come to camp. At night, or in poor weather, the lodge has plenty of room for table games or other indoor activities.

A limited amount of sports equipment is available at Ravencliff. Before you come to camp, talk to the caretaker about what is available and determine what your group will need to bring.

Arts and Crafts

A separate arts and crafts cabin with a sink, storage space, work tables, and plenty of room is located near the Headquarters cabin. Groups will need to bring their own supplies.

Campfire Circle

The campfire area is set up with log benches and a small stage, as well as a permanent firepit. The "backdrop" of river and cliffs creates a dramatic setting for skits and musical programs.

Chapel Grove

A short walk along the riverbank leads to the chapel grove, a special place among tall trees for quiet reflection and inspirational gatherings. The chapel area contains log benches and a speaker's podium and table, suitable for religious services of any denomination.

Please keep in mind that the chapel grove area is used by agreement with the Redway Community Services District. Only supervised activities should take place in the chapel area and should be confined to the chapel itself.

RULES FOR THE USE OF CAMP RAVENCLIFF

The Good Neighbor Policy

Ravencliff's setting makes it seem far away from the rest of the world, so it's easy to forget the camp has neighbors --the State Park, the Redway Community Services District, and local landowners and residents -- whose property and privacy must be respected. We must also remember that the State Park and river are public land which others have the right to use. Please be aware that noise carries throughout the area through the river valley so campers should respect appropriate quiet times in the evening and early morning.

When members of your group, whether staff or campers, are in town, or interacting with local residents in any way, remember to uphold Ravencliff's good name by acting with courtesy and consideration. This "good neighbor" policy will encourage local people to be friendly and cooperative, and to recognize Camp Ravencliff as an asset to their community. Being good neighbors means that Ravencliff campers and staff will be welcomed and respected in return by the community that lives year-round in the area.

Boundaries

Please be sure your group remains within the camp boundaries unless you have specific permission to conduct an activity, such as hiking, on property owned by others. Boundaries are shown on the map. When your group arrives at camp, the caretaker will take the leaders on a walk to point out the boundaries.

An exception is Whittimore Grove, which is part of Humboldt Redwoods State Park. The entrance to the grove is the area where the first gate is located, just off Briceland Road. There are no facilities or hiking paths, but there is a magnificent stand of old-growth redwood and the opportunity to learn about the ecology of the ancient redwood forest.

Pets

Pets are not allowed at Camp Ravencliff

Public Access

Groups may not construct any barriers or take any actions that impede public access to public lands or water. This means, for instance, that the river may not be blocked by ropes or other devices. Enough room must be left for the passage of other swimmer, waders, and boaters.

Because Whittemore Grove is a few miles from the main highway and other units of Humboldt Redwoods State Park, and because it has no developed facilities, very few people visit it. If you do encounter hikers within the park boundaries, please remember that they have a right to use public land.

Access to Camp/Back Road Policy

The road to camp through the gate at Whittemore Grove is one-lane, unpaved, steep and winding, and may be slippery in wet weather. Camp Ravencliff is at the end of this road, which is shared by the State Park, the Redway Community Services District and local landowners. The shared use of the road has been a sensitive issue with the YMCA's neighbors for many years; therefore, we have established a detailed policy for using the road as good neighbors. The following rules must be observed by all users of Ravencliff at all times.

The "golden rule" is: bring as few vehicles as possible, and drive as little as possible. Carpool whenever you can. When you must go to town, find out if you can run errands for others to save additional trips. **Remember:** dirt roads are easily damaged by overuse and misuse. Soil erosion from road use eventually gets into streams and the river, damaging wildlife habitat and water quality. Driving carefully, and as little as possible, is one way to protect Ravencliff's environment!

1. Gate and Padlock

The main gate at Whittemore Grove has a padlock with a combination for Ravencliff's use. A second padlock, with a different combination, is for the Redway Community Services District. Ravencliff's combination will be given to your group's camp director or leader after receipt by the YMCA of a list of designated vehicles as required under Section 3a, below. **The gate must be kept closed and locked at all times** after entry or exit. Please do not leave the gate unlocked unless someone from your group is present to be sure unauthorized vehicles do not use the road.

2. Getting to Camp

The YMCA discourages use of any vehicle larger than a 13-person van on the back road. Larger vehicles are likely to get stuck, as well as cause damage to the road.

Buses cannot use this road. Campers arriving in buses must use one of the alternatives below. Your advance party, or a call to the caretaker before you leave, can help you decide which method will be best for your group.

River Crossing: Buses can drop campers off at Redway Beach or other nearby river crossing points. (Please arrange with the caretaker in advance.) In the summer and fall, it's an easy hike and refreshing wade through a shallow river crossing to Ravencliff's beach. For many years this was the traditional arrival at Ravencliff, giving campers a special sense of adventure. Call ahead to the caretaker to arrange for a guide if you are unfamiliar with the area.

Shuttle: When the river is too high to wade, leaders should arrange to shuttle campers in vans or passenger cars from the gate at Whittemore Grove. Arrange a shuttle for disabled or very young campers, as well.

Luggage: In either case, luggage can be brought in over the road in a pick-up truck or other vehicle of a safe size for the back road.

3. Vehicle and Road Use

a. Vehicle use on camp property is limited to those vehicles necessary to support user's program. Group's may bring in a total of five (5) vehicles at no additional charge. If additional vehicles are needed, a maximum of five (5) additional vehicles may be brought in for a charge of \$10/vehicle/day for day use or \$25/vehicle for length of stay. The Group must identify all designated vehicles in writing at least one week prior to arrival. A form is included when your contract is sent.

All other vehicles must park off-site and may not enter camp property at any time except as specifically provided herein or with the specific authorization of YMCA Camp Ravencliff year round on-site caretaker or manager. Persons arriving in extra vehicles must park off site and carpool to camp in designated vehicles. To avoid off-site parking Groups are encouraged to carpool from point of origin (e.g. Oakland, Arcata etc.)

b. Driving vehicles on the camp road between the camp gate and the Lodge must be kept to the absolute minimum. This will reduce wear and tear on the road, dust, noise, and the risk of road accidents. Advance planning of trips out of camp will help prevent unnecessary vehicle use and the number of trips in and out of camp.

c. Speed limit on the road, from Whittemore Grove (John B DeWitt reserve) gate to the camp is 10 mph, less if road conditions make it necessary. This road is 2 miles long. It will take at least 12 minutes to drive the road each way, so Leaders should give staff adequate time when trips to town are necessary.

d. Since there are other users of the back road, particularly RCSD (Redway Community Service District) plant operators, there is a good chance you will encounter other vehicles. Common sense, courtesy, and rules of the road apply. Drive slowly and be alert!

e. Vehicles must remain on the road. No off-road driving permitted at any time regardless of type of vehicle.

f. Irresponsible and careless use of the road, or serious damage to the road, can threaten your use of Camp Ravencliff. It may result in your group being asked to leave, and you may not be allowed to return.

4. Parking

a. Number of Vehicles

In order to minimize the use of the road, make camp safer, more pleasant, and to respect our neighbors, parking is designated as follows:

- * Two (2) vehicles in the designated parking area near the Lodge. We suggest a transport vehicle and an emergency vehicle.
- * Two (2) vehicles in the designated area above the road adjacent to the corral
- * All other vehicles must park in the designated parking area above the service road gate, a short walk from the main program and living areas. (at YMCA Camp Ravencliff Parking sign) If these vehicles are carrying supplies, they may be parked for 10 minutes at the corral parking area to unload and then must be moved to the designated upper parking area.

b. Special arrangements for handicapped or elderly persons must be made in advance.

c. Parking Enforcement

Unauthorized vehicles or vehicles parked outside of designated areas will be subject to the following enforcement: (offences are per group, not per vehicle)

First offence:	Warning
Second offence:	\$50
Third offence:	\$100

d. Tow Away

The YMCA reserves the right to have vehicles that violate the Parking or Vehicle Use regulations towed away **without warning** at Group's and/or owner's expense. The charge will be \$200 per vehicle per call (whether actually towed or not) payable to the YMCA in addition to any charges levied for towing and/or storage.

e. Service Vehicles

YMCA staff arranges propane service, garbage pick-up, road maintenance etc. Groups should not contact these service providers directly.

f. Deliveries

UPS, mail and other such deliveries should be made in town and should not be made at the camp. Groups must make arrangements in advance with on-site YMCA staff for local food service and related deliveries.

h. Off site Parking

Groups are responsible for securing off-site parking. Parking may be available at the Evergreen Mini Storage/Meadows Business Park at 1150 Evergreen, Garberville, telephone (707) 923-2064.

i. Vehicle Security

It is always a wise precaution to lock your car and not to keep any valuables in the vehicle. The YMCA is not responsible for vehicles or contents whether located on or off its property.

Camp and Forest Conservation

The natural environment of Camp Ravencliff, as well as its buildings and equipment, should be treated with care and respect at all times so that they can be enjoyed by many more generations of campers.

1. Natural features and buildings may not be damaged or defaced by writing, painting, carving or any other means. In the past, campers were allowed to carve their names on the sandstone outcropping beside the lodge, but since archaeological studies have proven that Ravencliff was the home of Native people for thousands of years, we ask that campers show respect for our predecessors by not defacing the site. Instead, we suggest that your group contribute to Ravencliff's history by creating a "plaque" including everyone's name, and drawing, objects, or words that highlight their adventures. The plaque can be hung in the lodge for the appreciation and wonder of groups to come.

2. Trees, shrubs and plants shall not be cut, marked, or removed. Mowing of the meadow to reduce the fire hazard and to improve the games field is done by the caretaker or persons specifically hired by the YMCA, and may not be undertaken by groups using the camp. Likewise, changes should not be made to any structures. Groups may not cut new trails or alter existing ones, or create new camping areas or fire circles without prior approval from the YMCA. Most physical alterations require prior authorization from the Executive Director of the Hilltop YMCA. See "For Further Information" at the end of this handbook.

3. Hunting and Fishing

- a. Firearms are **NEVER** permitted on camp property (even in locked vehicles). Hunting and target shooting are NOT permitted activities for campers, staff or volunteers. Ravencliff is too close to Redway and other lands accessible to the public for safe use of firearms for any purpose.
- b. Only legal fishing is permitted. This means obtaining a fishing license and following all regulations governing fishing. Salmon and steelhead in the South Fork Eel River are endangered species. If your group is interested in fishing, please check with the caretaker before you come to camp. Further information and licenses can be obtained at Brown's Sporting Goods in Garberville.

The YMCA expects all camp users to follow the law, to keep Camp Ravencliff a safe place, and to respect the wildlife on our property. Violations of these rules will be reported to the California Department of Fish and Game, and could possibly result in the arrest of the violator. Additionally, the group may be asked to leave camp and may not be allowed to return.

4. Groups should practice conservation of water, electricity, propane and firewood.

5. Maintenance items and emergencies should be reported to the caretaker immediately, and the caretaker will arrange for repairs or other help. Repairs necessitated by misuse of camp facilities are the responsibility of the renting group

6. The camp facility property is not to be altered or defaced in any way. Should your group wish to make changes to the facility, advanced approval will need to be secured from the YMCA Executive Director.

Health and Safety

Nothing spoils a camp experience more than an accident or illness! Almost all of these problems can be avoided by following common sense and a few rules that are specific to Camp Ravencliff.

See **Emergency List** for the numbers to call for various kinds of emergencies or problems.

1. Supervision: There must be at least one leader over 18 years of age for every 9 campers under 18 years of age. At least one leader must bunk in each cabin and should know at all times where his/her campers are, and be sure they are properly supervised when the cabin leader is not with them.

2. First Aid: Every group must have at least one leader with a current First Aid certificate available at all times. If your group is larger than 50, or if you will be staying at Ravencliff more than 5 days, you will be required to have a currently certified nurse on duty 24 hours a day.

Two medical clinics, Redwoods Rural Health Center in Redway and the Southern Humboldt Community in Garberville, are open during regular business hours Mon.-Fri. Both clinics will see patients on a “walk-in” basis, but your waiting time will be less if you call first. RRHC also has a dental clinic and will see patients with severe toothache that needs immediate care on a walk-in basis. The Jerold Phelps Community Hospital (formerly Southern Humboldt Community Hospital) has a 24 – hour emergency room with a doctor on call. Emergencies that require X-rays, such as sprains, possible broken bones, or head injuries, should be take directly to the emergency room.

Outdoor Safety: Outdoor activities sometimes require taking special precautions to avoid mishaps.

a. Ticks: Everyone should check for ticks daily. Campers should be told to report all tick bites to the nurse or first aid staff. Some ticks carry Lyme disease, which may have serious long-term consequences if not treated. Anyone who has been bitten by a tick and develops a spreading rash, fever and aches 3-30 days after the bite needs to see a doctor and be tested for Lyme disease.

b. Spiders and Insects: Be careful when working in woodpiles, under buildings, or any place where you see thick, sticky, messy-looking webbing, as this where black widow spiders may be living. Bees and wasps can be discouraged by not leaving food in any open-air area for more than a short time. Leaders and the camp nurse or first-aid person should be informed of any campers who have allergies to insect bites. If possible, allergic persons should carry a bee-sting kit with them.

c. Animals: There have been recent sightings of bears and mountain lions at and near Camp Ravencliff. Wild animals should always be observed from a respectful distance. Animals that behave oddly, or that don't run away when you approach them, should be avoided. Report any peculiar animal behavior to the caretaker. Please review the attached information on bears and mountain lions and share it with your group leaders. Additionally, cabin doors or screens should remain closed at all times to keep bats from entering camper cabins.

d. Poison Oak: Most people have some degree of allergy to poison oak. Look for the bush with leaves growing in groups of three –late in summer it begins to turn a gorgeous scarlet color – but don't touch it! If you do, wash the exposed skin in soap and cool water right away. By staying on the trails and in the established program and living areas, you will minimize your chances of encountering this pesky plant.

3. Fire Safety: A fire drill must be conducted in cooperation with the caretaker within 24 hours of your group's arrival. Instructions given at that time must always be followed when the fire alarm signal is heard.

Burning materials of any kind, including candles and kerosene, white gas, or propane lanterns are not permitted in any of the buildings. Do not bring lanterns or candles to camp! Fuel – burning heating or cooking devices are also prohibited. Bring only battery – powered lanterns and flashlights. Bring only battery-powered lanterns and flashlights. This regulation is in accordance with state and county fire laws, and must be strictly enforced. YMCA staff will occasionally check the cabins and other buildings and will report violations to your group's camp director. Continued violation after a warning has been given may result in loss of your permission to use Camp Ravencliff. Your group may be asked to leave and may not be permitted to return.

Fires are permitted only in the designated campfire circles and the woodstoves in the lodge and the headquarters cabin only. An adult leader must always be present from the time the fire is lit until it is safely extinguished. If conditions become extremely dry, the local State Fire Marshal may prohibit all open fires. The caretaker will let you know if this occurs.

Cigarette smoking is permitted only by those of legal age and only in designated areas. Designated smoking areas are the lower parking lot near the garbage dumpsters and the beach area. Cigarette butts should be completely extinguished and thrown away in the dumpster.

Again, because of the serious nature of fire danger at Ravencliff, violations of fire safety rules may result in loss of your group's permission to use Camp Ravencliff.

4. Waterfront: Groups who wish to use the waterfront must make arrangements with the caretaker in advance. All water-related activities are at your group's risk. A lifeguard with Lifeguard Training, First Aid and CPR for the Professional Rescuer certificates must be on duty during all water – related activities. A copy of current certifications must be on file with the YMCA office. There must be one certified lifeguard for every 25 swimmers or fraction thereof.

Canoes, paddles, and lifejackets are available at Ravencliff, although groups may bring their own canoes, rowboats, paddle boats, kayaks, etc. if they wish. Motorized boats and jet-skis are not

permitted. Boats may be used during daylight hours only and all boaters must wear lifejackets while in the boats.

If your group plans boat trips outside Ravencliff, be sure to launch and land your boats only at designated landing points. Although no one “owns” the river, the adjoining land may be private property, even if there is no sign of habitation. Look in the “Source” section for boating guides or call Humboldt Redwoods State Park for more information.

PLEASE NOTE: Though the river is safe for properly supervised swimming, it is not safe for jumping off the cliff, and as such campers, staff and volunteers are not permitted to engage in such activity.

5. Clean – up and Camp Maintenance: Each group must take responsibility to keep the camp clean and safe. Groups may hire YMCA janitorial staff to do part of the clean up for an additional fee. Please make arrangements with the caretaker at least two weeks in advance. A clean-up checklist is attached at the back of this manual.

Throughout their visit, all groups are responsible for the following tasks:

- 1) Wash dishes and clean kitchen after each meal.
- 2) Clean cabins daily.
- 3) Clean program areas and games fields after each use.
- 4) Keep trash in appropriate bins and empty into trash dumpsters when full. Keep dumpster lids closed and do not allow trash to fall on the ground.
- 5) Clean and sweep bathrooms and showers daily (including washing sinks and toilets)
- 6) Sweep and clean the lodge daily.
- 7) Check all areas of camp in use and pick up litter and debris.

At departure your group will be expected to have completed the following clean-up tasks:

- 1) Sweep cabins & remove all debris
- 2) Clean bathrooms including washing sinks & toilets, sweeping floors and removing all debris
- 3) Sweep all program cabins and the lodge and remove all trash and debris
- 4) Clean kitchen including sinks and grill; remove all food from refrigerator and shelves; sweep and mop floor; clean all shelves and counters; all dishes washed and put away; all trash removed and garbage cans left empty; clean dishwashing room with all dishes put away and floor mopped
- 5) Any litter removed from all grounds
- 6) All trash emptied into large trash dumpsters
- 7) All waterfront and other activity equipment stored in appropriate areas
- 8) If group recycled, all recycling must be removed at departure. We do not have pick-up service for recycling.

Failure to complete these tasks will result in YMCA janitorial staff finishing clean-up. These charges will be deducted from your security deposit along with a \$50 fee.

6. **Use of Equipment:** All equipment to be used by your group must be checked out with the caretaker. An inventory will be taken during orientation and again before your group leaves camp. Your group will be responsible for repairing or replacing damaged or lost supplies and equipment.

7. **Insurance/Liability:** Your group must carry liability insurance to cover any type of loss or injury incurred while at Camp Ravencliff. During the period that your group is using Camp Ravencliff, you must place the YMCA on your general liability policy as an “additional insured.” You must furnish the YMCA of the East Bay with that certificate of insurance at least 10 days before your stay begins.

Reserving Camp Ravencliff

To reserve YMCA Camp Ravencliff, contact Bria Cartwright at the Hilltop YMCA at (510)222-9622. Reservations will be taken beginning 1 year prior to the start date of the reservation request. Reservations will be taken by phone and a contract will be sent to the reserving group. Signed rental agreement and deposit in the amount of 10% of expected fee (\$50.00 minimum) must be received by the YMCA within 30 days of initial reservation or reservation will be canceled. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable.

Groups will be billed for the remaining balance after the conclusion of their visit, based on numbers provided by the camp caretaker. Balance will be due within 30 days of billing date.

Payment may be made in the form of check, money order, VISA or MasterCard. Checks must have name and address pre-printed on them.

Returning groups wishing to rent Camp Ravencliff will be contingent on adherence to the above guidelines, prompt payment of balance due and condition of camp at departure.

Rev. 03/15/05



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

**YMCA Camp Ravencliff Wildlife Encounters
Information, Prevention and Safety**
(source: California Department of Fish & Game)

All visitors at YMCA Camp Ravencliff are informed that there have been sightings and/or tracks of bears and mountain lions at or around YMCA Camp Ravencliff. All visitors are expected to follow the guidelines listed below:

California Black Bears

California has a large black bear population estimated to be between 16,000 and 24,000 bears. Although black bears rarely attack people, these strong predators are potentially dangerous and are capable of seriously injuring or even killing humans. Often these incidents are the result of human behavior. The chances of conflict can be lessened by following several guidelines:

Preventing Bear Encounters

Remove or contain all bear attractants.

Bear attractants include food, pet food, garbage and anything smelly or edible.

Bears are also attracted to beehives. Bears may also be attracted by the scent of toiletries.

Keep barbecue grills clean

Do not leave unclean dishes or utensils available

Do not discard fruit or remnants on the ground and pick up fallen tree fruit

Keep garbage can lids securely attached

Never feed a bear, even unintentionally

Once bears obtain food from people they associate all humans with food. Without their natural fear of people, bears may become increasingly aggressive.

Keep a close watch on children whenever outdoors and teach them what to do is a bear approaches.

What to do if You Encounter a Bear

Most black bears try to avoid confrontation when given a chance.

If you encounter a bear make sure to give it enough space to escape.

Do not run from a bear.

Running may stimulate its instinct to chase. You cannot outrun a bear.

Stand and face the animal. Make eye contact without staring.

If you have children with you, pick them up so they do not run or panic.

If the bear approaches, try to demonstrate that you may be a danger to it. Make yourself appear larger, stand up, raise your arms and open your jacket, yell at the bear, bang pots and pans or whatever objects you may have, and create a general commotion.

If a black bear attacks, behavior is quite variable. Research indicate that bear attacks have been avoided an injuries reduced when the victims fought back using any means available. Throwing rocks and striking the bear with branches or camping equipment have been shown to be effective.

If a bear behaves aggressively or attacks people contact the California Department of Fish and Game Northern California office at (916)255-2300.

California Mountain Lions

About half of California is prime mountain lion country. These large, powerful predators have always lived here, preying on deer and other wildlife, and playing an important role in the ecosystem. Today, the California Mountain Lion population is estimated between 4,000-6,000 and they are classified as a “special protected mammal”. Generally, mountain lions are calm, quiet and elusive. They are most commonly found in areas with plentiful prey and adequate cover. As mountain lion and human populations have grown, so have mountain lion/human interactions. Even so, the potential for being killed or injured by a mountain lion is quite low compared to many other natural hazards. There is a far greater risk, for example, of being struck by lightning than of being attacked by a mountain lion.

Preventing Mountain Lion Encounters

Don't feed wildlife

Feeding deer, raccoons or other wildlife will inadvertently attract mountain lions which prey upon them.

Keep children safe and supervised. Keep a close watch on children outdoors. Teach them what to do if they encounter a mountain lion.

Research has shown that mountain lions seem especially drawn to children.

Do not hike alone.

What to do if You Encounter a Mountain Lion

Do not approach a lion

Most lions will try to avoid a confrontation. Give them plenty of space to escape.

Do not run from a lion

Running may stimulate a lion's instinct to chase.

Stand and face the animal. Make eye contact.

If you have children with you pick them up if possible so they don't panic and run.

Although it may be awkward, pick them up without bending over or turning away from the mountain lion.

Do not crouch down or bend over

Research indicates that lions tend to ignore humans as prey because they are not the right shape as prey. A human bending over looks a lot more like a four-legged prey animal.

Do all you can to appear larger. Raise your arms, open your jacket, pick up small children. Wave your arms and speak firmly in a loud voice.

Throw stones branches or whatever you can reach without crouching or turning your back

Fight back if attacked.

Use whatever you can – rocks, tools, caps, bare hands. Since a mountain lion usually tries to bite the head and neck, try to remain standing and face the attacking animal.

If you are involved in a face-to-face encounter with, or an attack by, a mountain lion, contact the California Department of Fish and Game 24 hour dispatch center at (916)445-0045.

AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF YMCA CAMP RAVENCLIFF

The undersigned confirms that he/she received and has read a copy of the Camp Ravencliff Handbook, is an authorized representative of the below-listed Group and agrees that said Group and all persons in any way associated with it will abide by all the provisions and regulations governing the use of Camp Ravencliff including but not limited to:

1. All Vehicle and Road Use and Parking rules
2. The Group agrees to pay for all telephone charges incurred during the stay at Camp Ravencliff irrespective of who incurred the charges or the nature of the charges.
3. The Group specifically understands and agrees that it is responsible for the cleanliness of the camp per Section 5 Clean-up and Camp Maintenance.
4. The Group agrees to pay for the loss or damage to all camp property, including both natural features and buildings/equipment, incurred during its stay.
5. The Group has read and understands and agrees to abide by the rules regarding waterfront safety, including lifeguard ratio & certification requirements. The Group understands the river is not safe for jumping off the cliff. In consideration for being allowed to rent Camp Ravencliff, 1) the Group agrees to not permit their campers, staff or volunteers to engage in such activity 2) if there is any breach of these agreements they agree to hold the YMCA harmless and to indemnify the YMCA for all claims, settlements, investigation, defense, or other costs arising in any manner from such jumping, climbing, or in any other fashion playing on or around the cliff.

This Agreement is in addition to the provisions of the “YMCA Camp Ravencliff Rental Agreement.”

Name of Group

Signature

Street address or PO Box

Printed Name

City, State, Zip

Title

(____) _____
Telephone

Date

**YMCA Camp Ravencliff
Rental Group Departure Checklist**

The following items will be reviewed by the caretaker at your departure. Any incomplete areas will be completed by YMCA staff and group will be billed appropriately as indicated in the Camp Handbook.

Group Name _____ Date of Departure _____

Cabins:

- _____ 1 mattress per bunk, no extra bunks in cabin
- _____ Tables clear and clean
- _____ Floors swept well including area behind ladders
- _____ No garbage/debris in, under or around cabins
- _____ No graffiti of any sort (paint, chalk, etc.) in or on cabins
- _____ Clotheslines clear of all items

Kitchen/Jackson Room/Dish Deck:

- _____ All dishes washed and put away neatly in kitchen and Jackson room
- _____ All shelves wiped clean and all non-YMCA items removed
- _____ Counters disinfected and clean
- _____ Indoor and outdoor sinks clean and clear, all stoppers accounted for
- _____ Microwave clean inside and out
- _____ Refrigerators empty, floor/shelves wiped clean
- _____ Ovens free of debris
- _____ Grill clean
- _____ Grill grease trap empty and clean
- _____ Floors swept and mopped with disinfectant
- _____ Floor mats cleaned and dried and replaced on floors
- _____ All garbage cans empty, washed out and placed upside down on dish deck
- _____ Dish deck hosed off and clear

<over>

Bathrooms (camper and staff)

- _____ Sinks and toilets clean and disinfected
- _____ Garbage emptied
- _____ Shower walls washed down and shower floors disinfected with bleach solution
- _____ Floors swept and disinfected and free of debris
- _____ No garbage or debris on grounds around bathrooms/leaders shower
- _____ Deck and clotheslines outside leaders shower clear

Camp Buildings

- _____ Headquarters building clear of debris, floors swept, deck swept, couch in good repair
- _____ Lodge floor and deck swept
- _____ Dining tables washed down with bleach solution
- _____ Board games stored neatly in games closet
- _____ Table games in good repair (pool/ping pong/foosball) and all equipment accounted for
- _____ Crafts cabin clear of supplies
- _____ Crafts floor and deck swept
- _____ Nurses cabin swept, sinks/bathroom disinfected, cabin clear of debris (if used)
- _____ High Voltage and Forestry staff cabins clean, floors swept, bunks and mattresses accounted for
- _____ No graffiti of any type (temporary or permanent) on any buildings inside or out

Grounds

- _____ Sports equipment stored neatly in “the cave”
- _____ All garbage and lost and found removed from the facility
- _____ No trash or debris on trails/grounds including parking area, line up area, campfire, trails, chapel, etc.
- _____ All garbage placed in dumpsters with lids closed
- _____ Any garbage that doesn't fit in dumpsters removed by group
- _____ All recycling removed by group
- _____ No trash remnants, food, etc. on ground near dumpster

Caretaker:

Camp checked by: _____ Date _____ Time _____

Complete? ___ Yes ___ No (hours to complete _____) # in attendance: _____