



# MOHAB

Montana High Adventure Base  
at the  
Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch



*"Our troop has sent three groups to MOHAB over the last two years. The packrafting program is one of a kind and the MOHAB staff incredibly knowledgeable. They have really have created a true 'boys lead' program. The experience has made a huge positive impact on our Scouts and their leadership skills. I should also mention that the Bob Marshall is probably the most spectacular remote wilderness experience you can find in the lower 48. The whole experience is A+." – Dan C., Adult Leader*

When I was filling out the application to work for Boone and Crockett, still attending Montana State University at the time, I noticed that not only did the job title list “Facilities Manager” as the position for hire but was also followed by “/MOHAB Camp Director.” After further inquiring during my phone interview with several B&C staff, I learned just what exactly MOHAB stood for—Montana High Adventure Base. (The O is a hitchhiker included to avoid our camp sounding like an uncomfortable medical procedure but doubles to confuse some folks more familiar with Moab, Utah.)

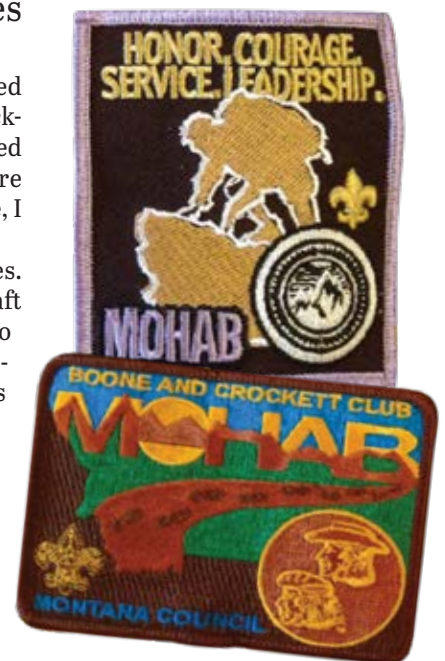
The Montana High Adventure Base is the nation’s only nationally accredited high-adventure Boy Scouts of America (BSA) program that offers backcountry packrafting experiences. Regardless of the apparent acronym fetish, MOHAB is operated out of the Rasmuson Wildlife Conservation Center (RWCC) located on the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch (TRMR) which sits just west of Dupuyer, Montana. (See, I wasn’t kidding about the acronym thing!)

Packrafts, for those that are unfamiliar, do exactly as their name describes. They are highly packable, extremely lightweight, yet very durable, personal watercraft used to traverse up to class III whitewater rapids or the calmest of still water no matter where your travels may take you. Some models are being made to accommodate two passengers, and many hunters have begun taking packrafts on their outings when near water in order to more easily transport harvested game.

Packrafting has not always been a primary program at MOHAB. In fact between 2005 when MOHAB offered its first trek into the “Bob” (Bob Marshall Wilderness complex) and 2013, trekking by foot was the only means of travel available for scouts. While the sightseeing, wildlife watching, fishing, witnessing spectacular vistas from various backcountry peaks and not to mention physically grueling and mentally refreshing trekking-only option were great, packrafting has catapulted MOHAB into the highest category of BSA high adventure programs.

If you know anything about Boy Scouts, you know that patches are a big deal! So much so that at the BSA National Jamboree, there are certain areas set up for patch trading where scouts from all over the continent and even the globe will gather to exchange, trade and barter for the next best patch. Some collections of patches sell for hundreds, even thousands, of dollars and typically many individual troops or councils make a unique patch specifically to offer when attending “Jambo.”

Just as some of our programs offered at MOHAB have changed and evolved throughout the years, so has our patch. The most current patch is awarded to the scout and scout leaders after they have completed their trek. It symbolizes a job well done; a complete and successful experience in which they had started preparing themselves for months, if not years, prior. After reading Dr. Brown’s “Ethics” column (pg. 32), I would like to take you through what our current patch represents and how it relates to the Boone and Crockett Club.



TOP: Adding packrafting has catapulted MOHAB into the highest category of BSA high adventure programs. ABOVE: MOHAB patches through the years. They are a big deal!



The current MOHAB patch.

*"Seeing that I want to major in Fish and Wildlife Biology and Conservation, getting to experience the vast Bob Marshall Wilderness was the time of my life. I had so many amazing experiences in one of the most beautiful places I have ever been to and I will never forget."  
— Corbin R., Scout*

In the center of the logo is a jagged peak, similar to the one used for BSA Venture crews, representing the many mountains the scouts will see, climb, and in which they will be immersed for their seven-day program. Many jagged peaks can be seen right from base camp at the RWCC and TRMR. Venture crews can be co-ed, but they must be 14-20 years old in order to participate in any high adventure program—the same audience to which MOHAB caters.

Encircling the jagged peaks is the rough outline of a compass. A compass can help guide scouts not only through the toughest parts of their MOHAB treks, but a moral compass keeps one on the right path throughout their entire life—a philosophy MOHAB hopes to inspire on day one.

Directly below the compass is the most unique piece of the logo. Almost resembling a skull and crossbones, pirate-like appearance is a backpack and two sets of paddles crossed behind it. In the center of the backpack is

a grizzly bear paw print—emblematic of the grizzly-inhabited country they have just spent six nights sleeping and living in while only having what they had meticulously packed and carried on their backs. Although packrafts are great when in water, they too need to be packed and carried when hiking from drainage to drainage.

Bordering the upper portion of the compass are the words: Honor, Courage, Service, and Leadership. To many, these words can mean different things for any variety of reasons. At MOHAB, this is how they are defined:

## HONOR

**Honor your surroundings by appreciating all it has taken to conserve these wild lands and wild places. Honor those that have fought for so long to establish and protect usable wilderness areas. Respect the wildlife, the water and the rugged grandeur you find yourself in.**

Within the first day of camp all of the scouts and

adult leaders learn the meaning of conservation as well as the history and mission of the Boone and Crockett Club and its founders.

## COURAGE

**Be courageous while trying something you may have never done before. A multi-day wilderness excursion with zero connectivity between you and the rest of society will be something many never get the chance to do. Absorb the solitude, and turn it into serenity. Attack every rapid with a can-do attitude!**

Some scouts attending MOHAB have never been in a wilderness or ever slept multiple nights outdoors.

## SERVICE

**Remember, you are not the only one who uses this land and these resources. Leave it better than how it was found. Serve others on the trail that may need your guidance or help, and they will return the favor when it is you that is in need.**

Day two of the MOHAB experience involves programs at base camp (RWCC) including trail meal packaging, group gear distribution, packraft training, expedition leadership and a shakedown hike.



*"MOHAB was the pinnacle of my trekking experience, covering over 100+ miles on foot and river. The scenery in the Bob Marshall Wilderness was epic! Spending the 4<sup>th</sup> of July along the Chinese Wall is a memory that I will never forget. Definitely recommend the MOHAB trek to everyone who wants a great wilderness packrafting experience."  
— Steve B., Adult Leader*



When returning to the TRM Ranch, many troops voluntarily participate in conservation-related service projects such as pulling noxious weeds or removing unneeded, dilapidated fencing.

## LEADERSHIP

**Every day you have the opportunity to be a leader on your trek, although not always will you be the first one in line going down the trail or river. Lead by example. Always be sure you are right, and then go ahead. And even when you are back home and look at this trip only as a fond memory, continue to lead the path of conservation within your community.**

On the first night at MOHAB base camp the scouts are tasked with choosing their own 5-day route through the 1.5 million-acre Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. An intimidating yet exciting and inspiring task!

Each scout has the opportunity to be the “leader of the day” as well as the “navigator for the day.” Each trek is scout-driven; meaning, every decision the party makes will be made by the scouts themselves and not the adults. From route itineraries to meal packaging and campsite selection, the scouts are in total control of their trek.

I often tell guests at the TRMR and RWCC that MOHAB is the worst part of my job. And I mean it. MOHAB is the worst part of my job because I am the base camp director, meaning I have to stay at the RWCC and cannot attend weekly treks with the rest of the crew. Being the first

point of communication between backcountry travelers and the “if-needed” emergency rescue responders (plus various other duties) sometimes has its exciting moments but often I find myself looking over wilderness maps and itineraries dreaming of what could be around each river bend or contour line.

One of the greatest parts of my job however is

being the one that gets to shake the hand of every scout that completes a trek, and present them with their very own MOHAB patch. Through their stories and photos, sunburned faces and callused hands, I can see and hear the newfound appreciation for our wild lands and wild places that has been instilled within them. And for being a part of that, I am honored. ■



*“Getting to explore the Bob Marshall Wilderness with some of my closest friends was one of the best experiences of my scouting career. It was great learning to packraft and navigate through wilderness without trails. It was an opportunity to showcase my scouting skills while learning new ones in an environment that was rigorously challenging, but also fun.” – Spencer L., Scout*



If you know of a scout or troop that is ready to earn their patch, call 406-472-3311 or visit [www.montanahighadventurebase.com](http://www.montanahighadventurebase.com) for more details. You can also follow MOHAB on Facebook and Instagram @BSAMOHAB