

MISSION BRIEFING

DATE:

MISSION STATEMENT:

This month you will learn how to conduct route planning and reconnaissance, which is mostly concerned with careful observation and recording significant on-the-ground data about the route and the area. You will plan out a route that is at least 2 miles long to a destination you have never been to before, and then you will execute your plan.

TASK:

Plan a foot-movement hiking route that is at least 2 miles long to an unfamiliar location. Execute the hike and observe and record relevant data points.

CONDITIONS:

- Planning phase: You can use a map of your area, or satellite imagery like Google Earth or Google Maps. Identify the target destination and how you will know when you arrive. Plan backwards from the destination to the start point and identify any major landmarks or points that you should be able to identify on the ground to use as check points – these can be things like significant terrain features, notable structures, large turns in a road or trail, creek crossings, etc. Using these check points, write out a plan of travel composed of “legs” between checkpoints and estimate your time of travel for each leg of the trip.
- Execution Phase: With a parent or Ranger buddy as necessary, carry out your planned hike. Note your start time and how long it took you to complete each leg of the trip. Note if your planned

checkpoints were easily identifiable on the ground, or if you observed any other ones that were better. Note your arrival time and give a description of the destination site. The goal is for your route notes, time measurements, and landmarks to be clear and accurate enough to be able to hand your route off to someone else who has never been there, and they would be able to follow your route without difficulty.

STANDARDS:

A successful mission will achieve:

- ☐ A route plan with identifiable landmarks, time of travel estimates, and destination arrival identifier (how you know when you arrive).
- ☐ Successful travel of your route and arrival at destination.
- ☐ Observation notes about landmarks and checkpoints, time of travel, direction of travel, and destination description from the ground.

OBJECTIVES:

This mission aims for:

- Learning terrain features and landmark identification
- Planning and estimation skills
- Observation and recording skills
- Exploration of your area and increased familiarity with it

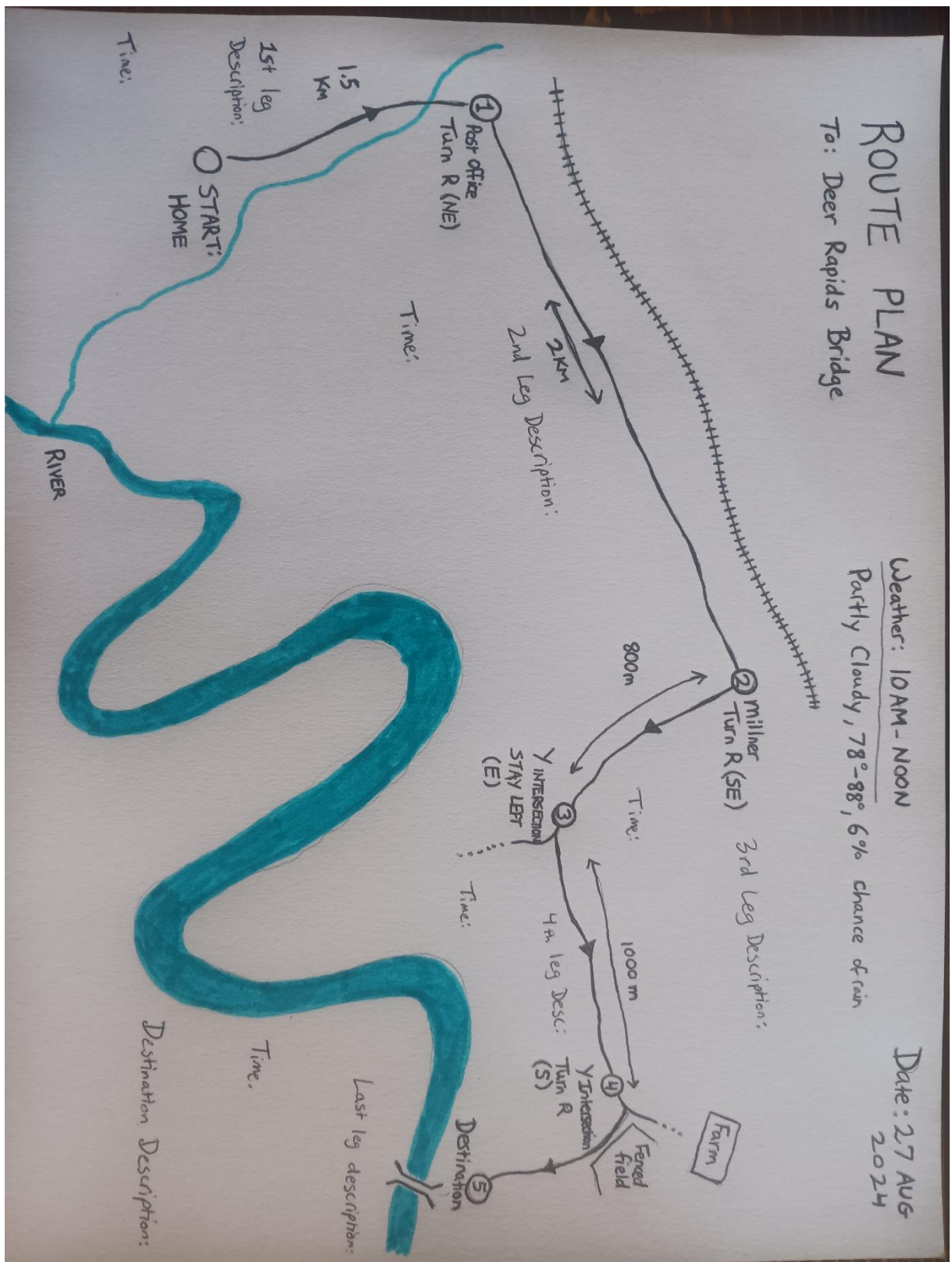
SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES:

You can do multiple route planning exercises this month, increasing the complexity if you find it easy. Older Rangers may hike their routes alone if the parents determine this is reasonable, however you should have a communications plan in place if you're doing a solo recon.

ROUTE PLAN TEMPLATE EXAMPLE

- The Candidate can fill this one out or make their own version themselves – just make sure to include all the relevant elements.

ROUTE PLAN					START POINT:	
DESTINATION:					Date:	
Weather Forecast on Route:						
Place or Checkpoint:	Direction of Travel:	Distance (meters):	Elevation gain:	Description of Route:	Estimated Time of Travel	Actual Time of Travel
EMERGENCY PLAN:						
Communication – Contact Numbers:						
Commo Check-In Times:						
Evacuation Plan:						
Lost/Disoriented Plan:						
Totals:				Destination Description:		
Start Time:			End Time:			



This is another route plan example, with a more visual layout. Ranger candidates can do it like this or any other way that helps them visualize all the elements they planned out during the route planning phase. Just make sure you have room on the sketch to fill in relevant data as you do the route reconnaissance.