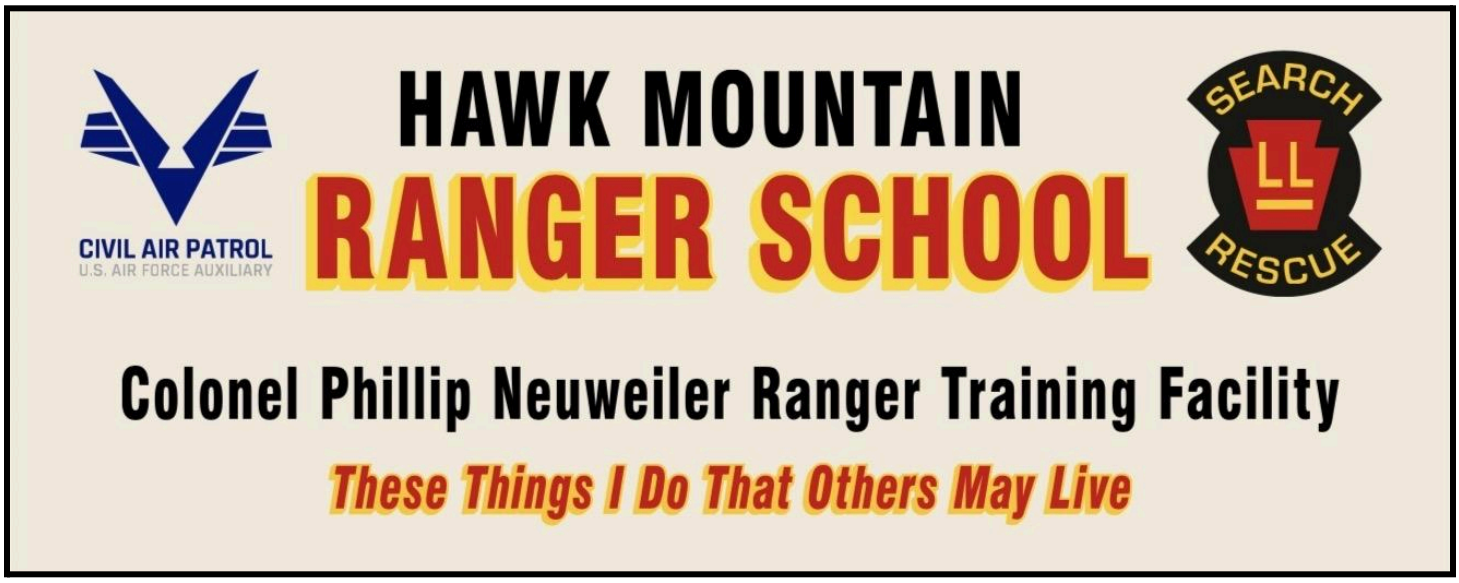


Civil Air Patrol National Cadet Special Activity

HAWK MOUNTAIN RANGER SCHOOL

Student Information Package

School Dates: 11-19 July 2026

Consider travel days on 10 and 20 July

Commander / Activity Director: Major Brian Bartle

Questions should be emailed to hawkmountain@cap.gov

They will be directed to the proper staff member

(Please provide your contact information, including the student's name, CAPID, and wing)

More information can be found online at:

https://www.capranger.org

From the Commander / Activity Director:

First and foremost, I want to extend my gratitude for your interest in the Hawk Mountain Ranger School and your commitment to undertaking this challenging yet rewarding opportunity. The Hawk Mountain Ranger School is the nation's longest continuously operating Search and Rescue (SAR) school and the largest National Cadet Special Activity in Civil Air Patrol. This year marks our 70th year. It stands as the most physically demanding, academically rigorous, and rewarding activity that CAP offers.

Whether you are a cadet or senior member, you will receive hands-on SAR training, field leadership experience, and survival instruction from some of CAP's most dedicated professionals, boasting decades of experience in SAR and wilderness survival. The primary goal of Hawk Mountain Ranger School is to develop leaders for Civil Air Patrol Emergency Services who are experts in wilderness Search and Rescue in challenging and austere environments. Consequently, this training takes place in the wilderness rather than in dormitories. You and your fellow students will face the elements, and your attendance will distinguish you from your peers. The knowledge you gain about yourself, the Ranger program, and Search and Rescue will stay with you for life.

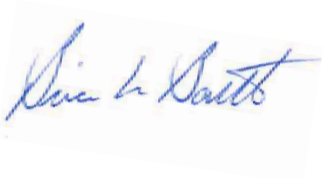
This is a completely outdoor school with few modern conveniences available to students. Conditions are primitive, featuring limited plumbing and electricity. Showers will be provided a few times during the week. You will sleep in tents for eight nights, regardless of weather conditions. The weather can vary from dry to rainy, with temperatures fluctuating from the high 90s to 50 degrees within hours. All cell phones will be collected at check-in, with students only allowed to call home in emergencies.

The Hawk Mountain Ranger School is in Berks County, Pennsylvania, five miles northeast of Hamburg, along the Appalachian Trail. This CAP corporate property spans 77 acres, near the Hawk Mountain Bird Sanctuary, bordering State Game and Forest Lands. The training will span these areas, including our three-day Field Training Exercise.

The school is incredibly demanding, both physically and mentally. You are expected to give your best effort over the nine days. Successful course completion requires achieving 80% of required courses (an NCSA requirement) and completing the Capstone Field Training Exercise. Failure to meet these requirements will result in not receiving credit for NCSA completion. Awarding Ground Team Member and Ranger qualifications depends on the successful demonstration of requisite skills to evaluators. GTM and Ranger ratings are not guaranteed solely by course graduation.

Please look for your official course acceptance letter coming via email within the upcoming weeks.

Thank you again, and we look forward to welcoming you to the CAP Ranger family!



Brian K. Bartle, **Maj**,

HMRS Commander / Activity Director

Action Needed: Accept OR Decline Your Slot in Writing by March 14, 2026

To accept your slot:

- Please email Hawk Mountain Ranger School hawkmountain@cap.gov with the subject line: Slot Acceptance Hawk Mountain Ranger School.
- In the body of the email, confirm you plan to attend.

To decline your slot:

- Please email Hawk Mountain Ranger School hawkmountain@cap.gov with the subject line: Slot Declined, Hawk Mountain Ranger School.
- In the body of the email, decline your slot.

It's okay if you change your mind and decide that this activity is not a good fit for you. We simply ask your courtesy to take action and decline your slot. This helps us offer that slot to another cadet on the alternate list. Thank You for communicating promptly.

Minimum Student Requirements

(See your acceptance email and website for complete information for any additional prerequisites.)

Cadets:

- Hold a current CAP membership.
- Must be at least 14 years of age by the start of the course.
- Must have completed Basic Encampment.
- Cadets 18 years or older must have completed Cadet Protection Training.
- Check if your Wing has any other requirements before applying.

Seniors:

- Must have completed Level 1.
- Must have completed Cadet Protection Training.
- Hold a current CAP membership.

After completing the required FEMA online courses, ensure you save the certificate sent from FEMA. Provide a copy of these certificates to your local senior Squadron Commander or ES Officer so they can be entered into the CAP 101 database.

Review your CAP Member Search Report. This can be found on the CAP Member login page. Sign in, then click "Member Search" on the left side. Enter all or part of a CAPID or name and press the Tab key. Click to view the Member Search Report on the top of the page. Make sure all required Safety, ORM, ICUT, 101 certification, and FEMA Certificates are listed. If they are not listed, give copies of your certificates to your local senior squadron commander or ES officer to record in the national database.

Members failing to meet attendance prerequisites upon arrival may be sent home immediately at their own expense. CAP and HMRS are not responsible for students who are not checked in due to failure to meet stated requirements.

Arrival, In-processing, Graduation, and Dismissal

School Arrival:

- Students may arrive between 0800 – 2130 hrs. on Friday, 10 July or 0600 - 1000 hrs. on Saturday, 11 July.
- Staff may start arriving after 1300 hrs on Thursday, 9 July.
- Formal check-in will be conducted between 0800 - 1100 hrs. on Saturday, 11 July.
- Early arrivals officially check in between 1300 – 2100 hrs. on Friday, 10 July.
- You will need your valid CAP membership card and complete CAPFs 160, 161, and 163 at check-in.
- Medication & Prohibited items will be collected, including cell phones, electronic devices, and other valuables. ** Please see the prohibited items list below.

Graduation:

- Graduation will take place at 1130 hrs. on Sunday, 19 July. All visitors are welcome, particularly parents and unit commanders.

Student Release:

- Families and others awaiting student release should expect a 1 to 2-hour period after the Parade & Review for the school to return to its normal woodland environment. Limited refreshments and souvenirs will be available for sale. You might want to take this time to visit the Hawk Mountain Bird Sanctuary located on top of the mountain or the Cabela's Super Store, which is only a few miles away. No personnel will be released until all squadron responsibilities are fulfilled, unless prior approval has been granted for restrictive travel arrangements.

Important Considerations:

- Note: Attendance at the school does not guarantee successful completion of the course or being awarded Ranger Grade or 101 ratings. Passing a skills performance evaluation is required to complete all courses, and a written test is required for advanced courses. Cadets and staff must complete 80% of the requirements of the course curriculum in contact hours to be eligible for graduation. Participants may engage in the entire course, but not graduate. If a student does not graduate per the graduation requirement, they will not receive credit for the NCSA in their training record nor will they be eligible for the NCSA ribbon. **Departure prior to graduation may prohibit course completion.**
- All Ranger Grades and 101 card awards are dependent on tasks that cannot be completed at the school. For example, you cannot earn GTM3 without first completing CAPT 117 part 1, IS100 and 700, Radio Operator ICUT, and Basic First Aid. Therefore, it is very important to complete all the prerequisites for the course you desire. After completing these online courses, ensure you save the certificate sent from FEMA. Provide a copy of these certificates to your local senior Squadron Commander or ES Officer so they can be entered into the CAP 101 database. Please check SQTR and Ranger Testing sheets to ensure you can fulfill all requirements. Completion of tasks at the school depends on the student's proficiency in demonstrating the tasks. In some cases, tasks may not be signed off at the school if the student is unable to satisfactorily demonstrate those skills prior to the end of training Saturday evening.
- Due to the rigorous nature of the school under actual field conditions, participants must meet Physical Category 1 and maintain it throughout the school. If students cannot participate in the school due to injury or commit an infraction of CAP Cadet Honor Code, they will be sent home at their expense if deemed necessary by the Activity Director
- Students in all our courses will actively participate in several "High Adventure Activities," including training in rappelling and completing the challenging confidence course. As with all other activities at

Hawk Mountain, these are supervised by appropriately trained and certified senior officers with many years of experience and using prudent and applicable safety precautions. It is highly recommended to start your physical training regimen.

- Important payment dates:
  - Standard Payment $525.00. Due date: April 15.
  - Late Payment is accepted Apr 16-22, but a $100 late fee is automatically added to your tuition total by National Headquarters CAP.
  - You must pay online in Registration Zone using PayPal or a credit card.
  - If you haven't paid your tuition by April 22, National will unslot you on April 23, which will automatically add you to the alternate slotting list.
  - The student fee is non-refundable.
- There is minimal Lost and Found at the school. Please notify us immediately, as this wilderness school is not staffed year-round and our ability to look for your items is limited. Please ensure you have all your gear before leaving the site. Put your name on everything.

Transportation/Travel:

- All students and staff are responsible for making their own transportation arrangements.
- Hawk Mountain Ranger School will only provide transportation to and from Lehigh Valley Int. Airport (ABE) and the Allentown Bus Terminal. To arrange pick-up and/or drop-off, email your full travel itinerary (arrival and departure) to hawkmountain@cap.gov. Transportation to the terminals takes approximately 1 hour. Do not schedule departing flights before 1500 hrs. on Sunday, 20 July. You will be sent a Google Form to complete.

Special Note: HMRS has made arrangements for students departing on Monday, 21 July. These students will stay Sunday night at Hawk Mountain Base with Senior Staff. The staff will ensure students arrive at the airport/bus terminals on time.

Air Transportation:

- Lehigh Valley International Airport is the only airport for which the school will provide transportation. Airlines servicing the airport include Allegiant, Delta, American, and United. For more information, call 800-FLY-LVIA or visit Lehigh Valley International Airport.

Ground Transportation:

- The Allentown Bus Terminal is the only bus terminal for which the school will provide transportation. Contact Allentown Bus Terminal at 610-434-6188 or Greyhound Allentown Bus Station.

Driving Directions:

- The school is located near Interstate 78, between Harrisburg and Allentown.
- GPS Address: 218 Pine Swamp Road, Kempton, PA 19529

From Lenhartsville Exit 35:

- Take Exit #35 of Interstate 78/US Route 22 "Lenhartsville." At the bottom of the ramp, turn left and travel north on PA Route 143 (Pine Creek Rd) for approximately 4 miles. Turn left onto Hawk Mountain Rd. (There will be a gas station on the right.) After approximately 100 yards, bear left at the "Y" and follow the road for another 3 miles. Turn left onto Pine Swamp Road and proceed about 1.2 miles to the entrance of the training area on the left. Signs are placed at critical locations to assist you.

From Reading/Pottsville Exit 29:

- Take Exit 29 towards Pottsville on PA-61 N. In about 4 miles, turn right (at the light) onto PA-895, Summer Valley Road. After 2.4 miles, turn right onto Hawk Mountain Road. Follow this for 3.8 miles, past the Hawk Mt Bird Sanctuary, to the bottom of the mountain. Make a right onto Pine Swamp Rd. Follow this for about 2 miles. Hawk Mountain Ranger School will be on the right. If you miss Pine Swamp Road on the way down the mountain, Pine Swamp Road intersects again approximately one mile later. Turn right onto the other end of Pine Swamp Road. Hawk Mountain Ranger School is on the left after 1.3 miles.

Hawk Mountain Ranger School Telephone Number: 717-685-5041

For more information, visit Contact Us | HMRS

Equipment Requirements:

- Packing list and choose “Summer School Packing List.”

Upon arrival at the school, each student squadron will set up tents in a field camp not far from the base area. Students must be able to carry their own gear to this area. During the 3-day field training exercise, much of their gear can remain at this camp. Students are required to have a large backpack (72-hour pack) and a small pack (day pack) for day gear. It is highly recommended that all additional items outside of field gear are brought in a Rubbermaid-type tote container to keep the gear dry when it is not in use. Use the HMRS packing list, not the 72-hour packing list in SQTR guide.

Students are responsible for caring for their own equipment. Prior to the school, organize and pack it so it is waterproof. For example, put socks in plastic bags and laminate your qualification cards. Prepack your day pack so it is ready to go when you arrive. Test all of your equipment. Pack only what you need. You may want to bring a limited amount of cash for the purchase of additional supplies - about $50.00.

Over the past few years, the Hawk Mountain BX has been developing business relationships with many equipment suppliers to provide students and staff with affordable equipment. You may preorder using the order form found on HMRS BX | HMRS or purchase items when you arrive at the school. Please remember that the BX is staffed by all volunteers. We will ship your order, but immediate shipping of equipment is often unavailable. To ensure availability, you can pre-order items and pick them up when you arrive at school (Orders must be mailed with checks before 20 June. Please do not email orders. See the directions on the order form).

Safety Equipment: Safety equipment is required for all Students and Staff. If they are not already, these items will become part of your normal Ranger Operations equipment. The following required safety equipment will be provided to you as part of your school fee:

- Orange hat
- Orange vest
- Orange hard hat with nape strap
- Eye protection

The following required safety items are NOT provided and must be brought by the student or purchased at the BX:

- All leather gloves are $10.00
- Eyeglasses strap (if needed) $3.00

Meals

- All meals will be provided; however, you may want to bring your own snacks.
- A dietary restriction Google Forms questionnaire will be sent to all participants after slotting is completed.

Links:

- Hawk Mountain Ranger School: Hawk Mountain Ranger School
- Ranger Testing Sheets: Ranger Testing Sheets
- Prohibited Items Policy: Prohibited Items Policy
- E-Services: Civil Air Patrol eServices Sign In
- FEMA Incident Management Training: NDEMU | Offline

Contact Information

Mailing Address: Hawk Mountain Ranger School, Bldg 5-105 Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville, PA 17003.
Note: Students will not receive mail during the school.

Phone: 717-685-5041 **E-mail:** HawkMountain@cap.gov

Physical Address: Hawk Mountain Ranger School 218 Pine Swamp Rd, Kempton, PA 19529

For detailed questions, please email HawkMountain@cap.gov. They will be directed to the proper staff member. Please provide your contact information, including the student's name and CAPID.

Hawk Mountain Ranger School
Prohibited Items Policy

To ensure a safe, healthy, and mission-focused environment for all cadets at Hawk Mountain Ranger School, families are asked to review the prohibited items list before packing. Gear will be inspected at check-in, and removing restricted items in advance streamlines the check-in process. Please only bring items that are on the HMRS Packing list.

Cadets who arrive with serious prohibited items will require notification of their parent/guardian and Unit Commander. When necessary, law enforcement may also be contacted, and the cadet may be required to return home. Thank you for your cooperation in helping us avoid these circumstances.

Items Prohibited That Require Immediate Dismissal

For safety and compliance with Civil Air Patrol regulations, the following items are not allowed under any circumstances:

Weapons or Dangerous Items

- Knives other than an approved pocketknife or multitool

  Do Not bring sheath knives over 6” long, switchblades, or machetes
- Firearms, ammunition, or replica weapons
- Pepper spray, mace, tasers, brass knuckles, or similar devices
- Fireworks, explosives, or flammable hazardous materials

Illegal or Restricted Substances

- Illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia
- Alcohol
- Tobacco products of any kind, to include Vapes, E-Cigarettes, Vape Cartridges, Cigars, Pipes, and Smokeless Tobacco, Chew, Snuff, or Zyn.
- Unauthorized medications, including any prescription medication not prescribed to the student, and medications not in their original container.

  Prescription Drugs. Follow CAPR 60-2 2.3.6: At overnight CAP activities, cadets will not keep medications (including both prescription and over-the-counter medications) on their person, unless the medication is one of the allowed rescue medications described in CAPR 60-2 2.3.6.2. Further details on cadet medications, including best practices, are found in CAPP 79-10, Cadet Medication Best Practices.

These items pose safety risks and cannot be permitted at the school.

Hawk Mountain Ranger School
Prohibited Items Policy

Follow the packing list - Do Not Bring

Items That Must Go Home at Check-In

The items below are not allowed during the activity, but do not require dismissal. If a cadet brings any of these, they must be taken home by a parent/guardian or the CAP member who transported them. Cadets cannot sign in until these items are removed.

Electronics & Devices

- Cellphones (can be secured with personal items sign-in, but cadets will not be permitted to have them during school)
- Smartwatches, Tablets, laptops, and gaming devices
- MetaAI glasses and similar devices
- Music players, earbuds, speakers
- Cameras (Disposable cameras permitted)

Food & Beverages

- Soda or sugary drinks
- Energy drinks
- Caffeinated beverages

Valuables & Non-Essential Items

- Large amounts of cash
- Expensive watches or jewelry
- Personal electronics not required for training
- Any item that the activity staff cannot safely secure

As part of the In-Processing Procedure, a Senior Staff Member will inspect your gear for unauthorized items.