

Burn in the Forest 2013 Leave No Trace - MOOP Report

by Abel (of Porta-Potty fame) and Burning Man Co-Regional Contact, Vancouver

Some of you clearly understand what Leave No Trace is about...and others, not so much!

As a wee reminder:

Leaving No Trace

Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

More info here: <http://www.burningman.com/environment/resources/lnt.html>

This also means that we all take responsibility for this and do not expect the organizers to do it for us. I had an epiphany about LNT and BitF whilst staring out my window at billowing trees on Monday morning at 7 AM. I decided, for the first time, to gather data about how campers and theme camps left the state of their sites.

My method:

Starting at the very end of the Indigo Zone and making my way to Vertigo, I visited campsites and theme camp locations. Armed with my clipboard and the map provided in the What When Where, I gathered the following data. I counted every piece of MOOP I picked up, whether it was a sequin, a feather, a bottle cap or a cigarette butt...no matter how old it was. If a bottle cap was embedded in the ground, I didn't count it and I didn't count against burnables in the fire pits. Next year, however, I would. All it takes is some wind and those papers/cardboard/tissues would be outta there. Plus, we are BURNERS; why wouldn't we take any opportunity to light things on fire?

If your site isn't mentioned, it means that you were probably still in your site when I came 'round, which means I had a wee chat about LNT with you and assumed you were suitably intimidated by my clipboard and beer in hand.

So, without further ado, here are the results:

POM = Pieces of MOOP

0-9 - Excellent

10-19 - Good

20-29 - Not so Good

30-39 - Dismal

40+ - Shameful

Site #1 - Shameful - Last Camp in Indigo Zone, or, as I like to call you, RED FEATHER

CAMP. This site was terrible, with 75 POM on ONE campsite. If every site was like this, I would have been at BitF until Friday. NOT COOL.

The rest of the Indigo Zone was quite good, ranging from 5 to 15 pieces of MOOP per site. Nice work!

Buddha Lounge - Excellent - 7 POM
Cirque de Relaxion - Excellent - 8 POM
Bad Parent Camp - Excellent - 3 POM
Bubble Camp - Good - 10 POM
River Rush Cafe - Excellent - 2 POM
SOBCO - Good - 15 POM

In this area, however, was the WORST camp for LNT. Not only did I pick up 110 POM on an area of about 40 sq. feet, they also left behind some tomato cages and a half disintegrated blue tarp. This was not a theme camp but was located on the water across from CdR. This was really disappointing. Your camp owes me some wine. I like New Zealand Sauvignon Blancs.

The non-themed camps in between Bubble Camp and Crave Chill Lounge weren't that great, ranging between 10 and 32 POM per site.

Crave Chill Lounge - Not so Good - 32 POM, including big items like paper towels, etc.
The C-Section - Good - 11 POM
Bed Akzent Camp - Good - 16 POM
Disaster Area - Excellent - 5 POM
Camp Beaverton and Gender Blender - Excellent - 3 POM
The Empress - Excellent - 2 POM
We Love it All/Heavy Petting Zoo - Not so Good - 26 POM, including 4 large segments from different ropes. Thanks for the variety.
No Pants Camp - Dismal - 33 POM, including a half burned hockey stick? Weird.
Vertigo - Good - 13 POM, but you left behind a string of white LEDs. No, I don't have them.

Some trends I noticed: theme camps were generally better than individual campers, roads and common areas were generally good, camps that left on Monday were MUCH better than those that packed up on Sunday, bathroom areas were rather gross...and I don't mean the garbage and recycling, but rather the tissue everywhere.

Recommended plan for next year: I'm not gonna lie, doing this by myself was hard. I would like to see a small team of people join the LNT co-ordinator on Monday to do a more complete report. I would have liked to do the dance areas, common areas and art installations, but I didn't have time. After five hours, I was feeling the sun and my quads will never be the same. Thanks to all those who supplied me with semi-cold beer as I made my way around!