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Job Description for MULE PACKER/WRANGLER:

Wilderness outfitting is a unique business that requires a variety of specialized skills for our packers and wranglers. A thorough knowledge of livestock use and handling is essential. The knowledge to fit and adjust saddles for both the rider and for the pack stock is essential for guest, staff and the animal's safety and comfort. Packing mules with loads up to 90 pounds per side, while traveling long distances over mountain trails in all weather conditions requires someone with the physical ability and the wilderness camping and survival skills to make a safe and enjoyable trip for our guests. Our animals work hard for us and we want to do everything we can to take care of them. On a daily basis, horses must be hobbled and taken out to graze morning and evening. Mules are turned out at night and need to be rounded up in the morning. At times it is necessary to ride with the stock while they are grazing. It is also important to take care of the saddles, blankets, bridles and pack equipment. Proper care extends life and preserves expensive items.

The packers and wranglers are responsible for breaking camp in a timely manner on moving days. This often starts early in the morning. Manty's are laid out, and the camp gear and duffle are then evenly distributed onto the manty's. Manty's are then tied up and mules are brought over for loading. Once the camp and duffle have been mantied and loaded, the mules are split into separate strings and we head out for the next camp site. Having the knowledge of, or the ability to learn, how to safely lead a string of mules is essential.

A positive attitude and the ability to communicate in a friendly and knowledgeable manner is essential. Guest and staff safety is always a priority. Taking direction and being able to work independently without constant direct supervision is a must. It is essential to be able to work as a team player. We are often together for up to 10 days at a time, pretty much 24/7. Loyalty and dedication to the outfit is required.

The knowledge, skills and abilities to perform this type of work can be acquired in different ways. Working with outfits, enrolling and completing packing and wrangling schools, on the job experience or a ranching background are examples of how to acquire these.

The primary responsibility of a packer is to manty the camp and duffle and loading these on the mules. A packer must have the knowledge of proper saddle fitting of both pack and riding stock. The packer also has a responsibility to the guests to help them get settled after arriving in camp.

The primary responsibility of a wrangler is the taking care of the stock. This includes but is not limited to, grooming, feeding and saddling. The wrangler also has a responsibility to the guests in helping them get settled after arriving into camp as well as helping when needed.