



Pack Llama Trail Association, Inc.

Dedicated to Preserving and Promoting the Working Llama
www.packllama.org

Hello! Thank you for participating in the PLTA. Here is an update from your President, Becky Cunningham.

Hello to the 2026 Packing Season

2025 was busy. Let's do it again.

- The year was filled with 17 pack trials.
- Two new sites for trials were added: Walnut Point Park in Illinois and Sagehen Headwaters on the Malheur National Forest in Oregon.
- Congratulations to 14 llamas earning certification: 9 Basic, 3 Advanced, and 2 Masters.

Changes for the 2026 Season

- The Handbook rules and regulations is undergoing a major update
 - Obstacle selection has been clarified
 - Expectations for llama behavior and performance point deductions have been refined
 - Upper-level trial requirements have been adjusted
 - Master trials now require llamas to carry only 20% of their body weight
 - Elite trials require llamas to be 5 years-old rather than 4 years-old
 - String Trials now allow llamas to be judged independently of each other
- 'Pack Trial in a Box' is being updated and expanded
- The PLTA Brochure, fliers, and posters /banners are updated and table-display ready for PR use. All are available for download off the website.
- Fees have been updated
 - Membership: \$30 year - individual, \$35/year - family, \$50/year - youth club
 - Sanctioning: \$50/day or \$150/year

The changes in fees reflect rising expenses, the main ones being insurance and website maintenance. Remember, the PLTA is a 501c3 organizations. Donations are appreciated. We currently need about \$2000 to upgrade and maintain the website.

Let's Get Packing

One hundred and nine (109) llamas have earned Advanced Pack Llama certification, but only twelve (12) have earned Advanced String certification. Did you know that String certification only requires two successful trials and that llamas can skip backward to undertake string certification at levels lower than the individual certification they hold? For instance, an Advanced Pack Llama can earn a Basic String certificate without going through individual Basic trials. Strings only require two llamas. Give it a try. You can do it!

Recently the board adjusted authorization of certifiers, breaking qualification into two levels: Basic-Advanced and Basic-Elite. This shift is designed to allow folks who prefer not to hike the longer distances required for Master and Elite to become qualified certifiers. It also acknowledges that demand for Basic and Advanced level trials is great. Please consider becoming a certifier, yourself.

Remember, handlers and stewards can trade off. They do not have to hike a complete course. Only the llamas do.

Let's Get Planning for 2026 Events

- **Renew your membership!!** Go to <https://www.packllama.org/join-register-sanction/join>. Membership provides crucial liability insurance for participants at PLTA events. .
- **Make sure your llama is registered.** This is required to be at any PLTA event. Lifetime registration is only \$15. Information about your llama's status and accomplishments is available on the website at <https://www.packllama.org/llama-records>. Start conditioning for participation in trials and Challenges now. Sign up for the mileage club to record your accomplishments <https://www.packllama.org/programs/mileage-program>
- **Plan an event!!** Mentors are available to help you with every aspect of planning. Fees to sanction an event are as little as \$50. Find mentors to help you on the PLTA website at <https://www.packllama.org/programs> Handbooks and how-to information is available at <https://www.packllama.org/programs>. Printable fliers, banners, and other promotional materials can be found at <https://www.packllama.org/about-the-plta>. Note: Basic trials are very simple to plan and do not require having an authorized certifier present.
- **Add to the Calendar.** Events scheduled for 2026 include:
 - April 24th & 25th in North Carolina. *Basic and Advanced* pack trials will be offered by Southern States Llama Association (SSLA)
 - By appointment at Burns, Oregon. Trials at *all levels* will be hosted by Burns Llama Trailblazers. As weather is a huge challenge, dates will be flexible.

Enhance Your Breeding Program

Prove out your breeders with PLTA credentials. Use the PLTA llama certification records at <https://www.packllama.org/llama-records/honor-roll> to review lineages of proven working animals. Add your llama to the list. Because certification requires qualifying against clearly defined written standards, acquiring a PLTA credential demonstrates that your llama is accomplished and dependable. The physical and mental qualities necessary for certification are passed on through the generations. Let people know what treasures you have. While 463 llamas hold Basic certificates, only five llamas hold the top certification, Elite String. Your llama could be among them.

Volunteer!

The PLTA is a non-profit organization run entirely by volunteers. Currently a secretary and a website administrator are much needed. Contact a board member and let them know how you can help, be it a little or a lot.

Keep in Touch

PLTA Facebook page is our main means of getting the word out to members, but remember, the website is a treasure trove of knowledge. If you have something to add, contact one of your Board members. (see <https://www.packllama.org/contacts/board-of-directors>)

Becky Cunningham, President
Greg Hall, Vice President
Lisa Wolf, Database Administrator
Scott Noga, Treasurer