

## FOOTWEAR FOR NE OHIO WINTER CAMPING

Protecting feet is the biggest challenge for campers in Ohio's cold/wet Winters.

### Leather Boots

If depending on leather boots, they must be waterPROOF. This can be the result of silicon or wax impregnation OR an inner lining of waterproof/breathable material (e.g. Gore-Tex). These boots are fairly expensive.

### Shoepacs

Perhaps more practical are shoepacs with rubber bottoms and leather, nylon or rubber tops and a liner of felt, Thinsulate or heavy socks.

### Big Rubber Boots

All-rubber boots, if sized large enough to allow layers of socks, also work.

### But

Moisture that accumulates in the insulation layers of ANY boot must be dealt. Provide spare liners or socks to put on when the day's activities are over. Otherwise, cold, very cold, painfully cold feet may result.

### Socks

The Winter camping motto "Cotton Kills" applies especially to socks.

They must be wool, polyester, acrylic or blends of these. Carry an extra set with you during the day.

Polypropylene or polyester liners are super, since they wick moisture away from the skin and don't irritate sensitive skin.

**DON'T CRAM IN "EXTRA" SOCKS WHEN IT RESULTS IN A TIGHT FIT. YOU CRUSH OUT AIR (INSULATION) AND RESTRICT BLOOD CIRCULATION (HEAT) TO THE FEET.**

### VAPOR BARRIERS - AN ALTERNATIVE

If you cannot come up with Winter boots, try this. Put a plastic bag over each foot (No leaks allowed!).

But on thick, warm socks. Put plastic bags over the socks (Again, no leaks). The first layer of plastic keeps sweat out of the socks so they insulate. The out plastic keeps outside moisture out of the socks. At the end of the day, you will want to towel off your feet because they will have been in a warm swamp all day. If there is room a thin pair of polypropylene or polyester socks can go over the feet before the first plastic bags. The size of the boot or shoe must allow these layers without being tight for the reasons noted above.