



Left: Take a selection of head gear to suit all occasions.

weight ratio and is easy to pack.

Synthetic materials have additional benefits, such as being able to insulate even when wet.

■ **Head wear:** Your head contains most of the body's sensory organs and, as such, there is a lot of blood flow to and from the head. Leaving the head exposed in extreme weather can cause frost bite to ears, nose and lips, plus allow the body to lose a lot of heat. Simple solution: wear a hat, balaclava, or both! Be sure to have a hat that fits, is not too tight and covers your ears.

Something that I find useful is ear muffs and neck gaiters. Just a little extra comfort that is worth packing.

Included in head-wear should be sun glasses and goggles. Snow blindness can be a major concern. Snow blindness causes painful temporary loss of sight caused by the glare of reflected sunlight on snow

burning the eye cornea, similar to a welder's arc-eye. The prevention is simple. Have large lenses that filter 100 percent UV, which fit close to the face and have wrap around or side shields to prevent incidental light exposure.



■ **Gloves:** Notice how I mentioned gloves, not a single pair of gloves, but multiple pairs. Again, look for a base glove and insulated mitt. Always wear a base glove as touching metal with bare skin will rip the skin. Using a mitt instead of an insulated glove allows the fingers to transfer heat between themselves.

For my own peace of mind, I packed a few spare pairs of

gloves, as if we were involved in extended vehicle recovery such as winching, gloves may get wet or ripped.

■ **Boots:** Having warm or cold feet can make or break a trip. Ignoring the extreme conditions could be dangerous, leading to exposure and frost-bite.

Obviously, on a driving expedition where long hours were going to be spent in a temperate temperature (a vehicle cabin), a more normal insulated boot can be used. For outside excursions we would be standing in, on and around ice and snow.

LaCrosse has over 100 years expertise in low temperature boots through their many years of supplying seasonal ice fishers, so a couple of weeks in the Northern Canada's nether regions should be no problem. The boots chosen were the 14" 'Extremes', rated to -85°/-150°.

The 'Extreme' boot has multiple layers of insulation with

leather uppers which help to keep the boot dry. The boot also has a well insulated sole with an inner 'Thinsulate' layer which is a 3M insulation product that is used extensively for insulation applications. Be sure to take spare laces.

One very important aspect of expedition preparation is to check the fit and function of the clothing and gear before the trip. Admittedly, I looked silly walking around the house like a grounded astronaut, but it did serve as a physical checklist.

■ **Sleeping bag:** A sleeping bag should be rated to the conditions that you are visiting. In my case we were heading to an extremely cold area.

Once again, a good 800 fill goose down sleeping bag is the way to go. Most sleeping bags have zippers the length of the bag. Look for one that is well constructed to eliminate the down from clumping.



■ Next month we'll be covering vehicle preparation, so stay tuned and start spreading out the maps to plan your next trip.

**CONTACT:**  
Mountain Hardware  
4911 Central Avenue  
Richmond, CA 94804  
Tel: 800-953-8375

Lacrosse Footware  
18550 NE Riverside Parkway  
Portland, OR 97230  
Tel: 503-766-1010  
Fax: 503-766-1015

