

## **IAN Wilderness Trip Guidelines**

### **Guideline 1: Basic Wilderness Knowledge**

Understand the concepts necessary to teach, lead, and provide wilderness activities; and the intellectual, historic and philosophic foundations relevant to outdoor education in a wilderness setting. This includes basic knowledge of the following:

History/Philosophy

- Major events in outdoor adventure history
- Key events in the history of wilderness preservation
- Influence of wilderness in American culture
- Philosophical foundations of outdoor adventure (why these adventures are important)

Nature and Environmental

- Understanding of environmental issues of the area and the environment of the wilderness you are visiting
- Familiarity of plants and wildlife and the connection in nature of the area

Wilderness Travel & Planning

- Wilderness travel skills-examples include camping, cooking, backpacking, paddling, specific to your trip
- Navigation (GPS, map reading, compass)
- Gender diversity and fairness
- Experience promoting, planning, preparing wilderness/outdoor/education programming

### **Guideline 2: Teaching and Leadership Strategies**

Understand methodologies of teaching wilderness activities, knowledge of the concepts, models and practices of leadership in a wilderness environment. This includes understanding, experience and application of the following:

- Leadership theory, including ethics and styles
- Group dynamics & team building
- Teaching styles and methods, stressing interpretive technique
- Facilitate transforming wilderness experiences to participants future lifestyle
- Assessment and evaluation
- Decision making and problem solving
- Development of programming objectives
- Incorporating science and ecology in recreation activities

### **Guideline 3: Safety and Minimal Impact**

Understand the principles of running safe activities; have been trained to respond to outdoor emergencies; and know how to minimize the environmental impact of groups when traveling and camping in natural areas. This includes understanding and/or experience and application of the following:

- Liability and legal issues
- Identifying and managing potential risks
- "Leave No Trace minimal impact skills and principals
- Wilderness First Aid

- Safety in hazardous and adverse weather conditions
- Meal Planning & Nutrition
- One or more of the following, depending on the wilderness area to be visited: backcountry navigation, river safety and swift water rescue, climbing safety, backcountry survival, and avalanche safety.

#### **Guideline 4: Experiential Skills and Field Experience**

Understand the techniques, equipment and safety procedures associated with a variety of outdoor activities, take ample opportunity to learn, practice, and refine outdoor skills, and gain practical experience in leading outdoor activities and/or teaching outdoor skills. This includes the following for a specific wilderness area (s):

- Skills and abilities in selected outdoor activities and wilderness locations
- Familiarity with equipment and clothing required in selected wilderness activities and locations
- Ability to interpret natural, historical, cultural, and environmental elements related to the wilderness being visited
- Recommend that when leading a trip at least one leader has field experience in teaching and/or leading outdoor activities in a wilderness setting

Adapted from Outdoor Education Papers. Standards-based Accountability in Academic Outdoor Education Programs. Ron Watters.

2013. <http://www.ronwatters.com/Standards.html>