

UNL OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Climbing at Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge

Dates: March 11-15, 2022



DISCLAIMER: *Please note that specific details about this trip are subject to change. This packet provides a broad overview of what you can expect, but specific locations, timelines, and details may shift. Any changes will be communicated at the required pre-trip meetings.*

LOCATION OVERVIEW: The Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge

The Wichita Mountains sprawl over 59,000 acres of southern Oklahoma. The wildlife refuge is one of our most visually stunning sites for climbing trips, both for the gorgeous, numerous vertical granite routes, but also for the incredible natural environment. The Wichitas certainly leave a lasting impact on all who visit, and we are very excited to share it with you!

This land we will be recreating on belonged to the Wichita, Tawakoni and Waco tribes, among several others. These peoples have a rich history and culture here. In the warmer months, they lived in grass huts and depended on farming. In the winters, they followed the bison, depending on their meat for food. They engaged in trade with several surrounding tribes as well and were known for their beautiful ceramics. During the Civil War, the tribes living in west-central Oklahoma were forced into Kansas by Confederate troops. Many elements of the Wichita culture were destroyed by Christian missionaries after their return to Oklahoma. It is important on this trip to appreciate that this land is not ours, and to appreciate its original owners.

This unique spot is home to countless species, including the famous “Big Four:” bison, elk, longhorn and whitetail deer. In fact, the Wichitas are an important site of conservation, particularly for bison which were brought back from the brink of extinction on this land. In addition, there is a rich variety of mixed grasses, wildflowers and even cacti among the towering granite cliffs.

PERSONAL PREPARATION:

UNL Outdoor Adventure trips are designed for both beginners as well as people who are more experienced. However, even though a beginner could go on this trip, we advise people to climb as much as possible before departure. Climbing all day can be physically taxing, and participants will get the most enjoyment out of the routes if they have built up some endurance in the weeks prior to the trip.

TRANSPORTATION:

All transportation is included in the price of the trip. University vehicles will be used as transportation to and from the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. We will depart from UNL Outdoor Adventures in the afternoon on Friday, March 11th

WEATHER:

Weather is very variable and subject to change, but the following are averages for mid-March. Please refer to the personal gear checklist to make sure you are adequately prepared- rain gear and warm layers are a must!

Average High Temperature: 66 °F

Average Low Temperature: 40 °F

Sunrise: 7:30 AM

Sunset: 7:30 PM

CAMPSITES:

We will be staying at group camping sites in 3 or 4 person tents. Amenities at the campsite include toilets. Bathrooms may be a bit of a walk away from the tents. Campsites are about half an hour from Medicine Park, OK.

FOOD AND COOKING:

As with all aspects of this expedition, cooking will be a group effort. Everyone will be responsible for washing their own dishes and helping with the group dishes after each meal. All meals while at the climbing site will be provided by Outdoor Adventures. You will just need to cover the meals as we are driving. Please see the trip itinerary for specific meals that are **not** provided by Outdoor Adventures. Please inform the trip leaders of any dietary concerns or needs during the pre-trip meeting.

MINIMUM IMPACT LIVING/LEAVE NO TRACE:

Going into areas like the Wichitas is like visiting a museum. If everyone left a mark going through the museum, the artifacts would be soon destroyed. The same goes for wilderness areas. If we all leave one our mark on the landscape, the wilderness would soon be despoiled. In order to create the minimum impact, we will be practicing the principles of Leave No Trace. This includes packing out all waste, staying on marked trails, taking nothing but pictures, and being respectful of other visitors and especially wildlife*

For more information about the 7 principles of leave no trace, go to <https://Int.org/why/7-principles/>

**We will see bison on this trip. They roam freely around the entire refuge. Bison are large and potentially dangerous animals if provoked. It is vital for both your safety and the safety of the wildlife to keep your distance (at least 25m).*

EXPEDITION BEHAVIOR:

Expedition behavior means taking care of yourself and other group members. Everyone has signed up for the trip for their own reasons, but the experience itself will be a shared experience between all members of the trip. Your presence and behavior on the trip affects others' experience in all sorts of ways. On this trip, camp responsibilities are shared. Everyone will take their turn to do dishes, help cook, carry group gear etc. This also means taking care of yourself- if you are unhealthy, it will negatively impact the experience for others. For example, it is important to stay hydrated, to not unnecessarily endanger yourself, and communicate concerns to trip leaders. Characteristics such as respectfulness, flexibility, tolerance of others, courtesy, direct communication, self-awareness, and teamwork become critical when traveling in groups in remote areas. Proper E.B. can make difference between a good experience and a great one!

SMOKING, ALCOHOL, AND CELL PHONE POLICIES:

In the spirit of expedition behavior, please do not bring alcohol or illegal substances on the trip. Cigarettes are acceptable at established areas but are not allowed to be used in vehicles. We would encourage you not to smoke on this trip out of respect of other participants. Further, please be respectful of other participants with cell phone use. We ask that cell phones not be used in vehicles or at the activity site and when used, please use away from the group. Be present in the moment. In the short time we are on the trip, we want to focus on building relationships and taking in the incredible sights and sounds of the area. We hope that you do, too.

WHAT'S PROVIDED BY OAC:

All transportation, meals while at the activity site, all activity-related gear and camping equipment, camping fees, leadership, and instruction are provided by Outdoor Adventures. The trip cost does not include personal clothing and equipment, or meals outside of the activity site. Be sure to bring cash and a debit/credit card for meals and souvenirs.

MORE INFO:

Climbing Routes Resource: <http://www.mountainproject.com/>

Wichita Mountain Wildlife Refuge: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/wichita_mountains/

CONTACTS:

UNL Outdoor Adventures Center: (402) 472-4777, <http://crec.unl.edu/>

PERSONAL GEAR CHECKLIST

Rock Climbing Gear:

- Chalk Bag*
- Climbing Harness*
- Climbing Shoes*
- Climbing Helmet*
- Comfortable Closed Toe Shoes
- Comfortable Climbing Clothes (2-3 pairs)
- Warm clothing Layers (Long Sleeve Shirt, Jacket, Hoodie, etc...)
- Rain Jacket
- Sunglasses

*Gear can be provided by the Outdoor Adventures Center

**Note: Any personal climbing gear must be approved and inspected by an Outdoor Adventures trip leader

Clothing:

- Comfortable shoes for camp
- Socks (wool or synthetic)
- Long Underwear/Base Layer (wool or synthetic)
- Underwear
- Quick Drying Shorts and/or Pants
- Rain Pants
- Rain Jacket
- Synthetic T-Shirts
- Synthetic Long Sleeve Shirt
- Fleece or Insulating Jacket
- Lightweight Gloves
- Lightweight Stocking Cap
- Sun Hat

Personal Items:

- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, etc...)
- Sunscreen
- Lip Balm with SPF
- Prescription Glasses, Contacts, and Case
- Personal First Aid Kit, Medications, Prescriptions
- Camera
- Journal with Pen or Pencil
- Tampons, Pads, Towelettes
- Water Storage (minimum of 2 Liters in total capacity)
- Pillow

Travel:

- Small Backpack for Car and Climbing
- Casual Clothes for Car Ride
- Toiletries/Towel
- Money/Credit Card

Gear That Will Be Provided by OAC:

- Tent
- Sleeping Bag (20 degree)
- Sleeping Pad
- Stove
- Cook Gear
- Food Bowl and Utensils
- Headlamp
- First Aid Supplies
- All Climbing and Technical Gear
- Personal Climbing Gear (as mentioned above)

Considerations: When packing for this field experience, please consider that there will be limited space available in the vehicles. Please keep your personal luggage to a minimum and bring only a small personal backpack filled only with what you need.

DAILY ITINERARY:

Friday, March 11

Leave OAC in the morning

Eat lunch & dinner on the road (*meals paid for by you)

Arrive at campsite in evening

March 12-14 (Saturday through Monday)

Wake up!

Breakfast at camp

Pack lunch and gear

Travel to crag

Climb, climb, climb! (Lunch will be at the crag)

Arrive back at campsite

Dinner

Chill time

Bedtime

Tuesday, March 15

Wake up!

Breakfast at camp

Pack up camp

Leave Oklahoma

Lunch on the road

Arrive in Lincoln

Cleanup

See you on the next trip!