

# UNL OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

## Snowshoeing and Ice Climbing San Juan Mountains

Dates: March 15<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

Pre-Trip Meeting: March 11<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-10:00pm



**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.*

**RIO GRANDE NATIONAL FOREST:** Located in Southwest Colorado within the San Juan Mountains, this national forest features 1.8 million acres of staggering valleys, jagged volcanic peaks, and alpine lakes. With its rich mining history, it is home to many abandoned ghost towns, many of which have been turned into cabins. We will be taking day trips into the mountains, travelling over icy terrain in our snowshoes. Eating lunch on the trail, we will see remote areas few have gotten to see during the winter months. We will be surrounded by numerous peaks over 14,000 ft in elevation, offering an awesome backdrop to our snowshoeing and climbing adventure. We will also be participating in an introductory ice climbing excursion with guides trained or certified by the American Mountain Guides Association near Wolf Creek Pass. While cell service is spotty at best, this trip is the perfect opportunity to unwind, disconnect, and create new friendships.

**PERSONAL PREPARATION:** UNL Outdoor Adventure trips are designed for both beginners as well as people who are more experienced. If you're new to climbing, no problem. Be ready to learn. If you're an experienced climber- that's great too. Be ready to challenge yourself in new ways!

However, even though a beginner could go on this trip, we advise people to take their physical condition seriously. Climbing and snowshoeing are physical sports and to get the most enjoyment out of the trip being physically fit is a

crucial part of this experience. We will be hiking around 3 to 5 miles each day of snowshoeing in mountainous terrain. Expect steep grades and difficult, unmaintained trails. While this trip will be incredibly scenic, make no mistake, it will be physically demanding. Please do not hesitate to ask the trip leaders about proper conditioning and please inform the trip leaders of any concerns that you may have

## **TRANSPORTATION:**

All transportation is included in the price of the trip. University vehicles will be used as transportation to and from Colorado. We will depart from UNL Outdoor Adventures in the afternoon on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **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 prepared - rain gear and warm layers are a must!\**

Average High Temperature: 50 °F

Average Low Temperature: 18 °F

Sunrise: 7:15 AM

Sunset: 7:12 PM

## **LODGING:**

This trip we will be staying in the Upper Crossing Guard Station Cabin, which used to be the old Cochetopa National Forest headquarters. This cabin has a kitchen, electricity, heat and inside running water. It is furnished with three bunk beds, with twin beds on the top and fold-out full beds on the bottom. The cabin has electric lights, propane heater and wood burning stove. The living area has a table and chairs, couch and other furniture, perfect for playing board games at night. There will be no Wi-Fi here, allowing us to be present and intentional, so bring your books and board games!

## **COOKING AND GROUP TASKS:**

As with all aspects of this expedition, cooking and cleaning will be a group effort. Whether out on the slopes or at the crag we will be eating cold lunches (along with plenty of snacks) but we will be cooking as a group for all breakfasts and dinners. The cabin we will be staying at will accommodate all of us, but it is imperative that we keep it clean, as it will get cluttered very easily. Do your part to clean up after yourself after use of an area. All meals while at the camping sites 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 the wild lands that we will be visiting on this trip is like going to a museum. You obviously do not want to leave your mark on an art treasure in a museum. If everyone left a mark going through the museum, it would soon be destroyed. The same goes for wilderness areas. If we all leave one little mark on the landscape, the wilderness would soon be far from its natural order and permanently ruined. To minimize our impact, we will be practicing the following Leave No Trace principles:

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

## **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, cabin and kitchen responsibilities are shared. Everyone will take their turn to do dishes, help cook, clean the cabin 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 necessarily 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 snowshoeing in groups in remote areas. Proper expedition behavior can make the difference between an enjoyable 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 in established areas but are not allowed to be used in vehicles. We encourage you not to smoke on this trip as a wellness challenge! If you must smoke, please respect other participants, be aware of fire danger, and of course pack out all related trash. Please be respectful with cell phone use by stepping away from the group if you decide to use your cell phone during transportation to and from our destination.

## **WHAT'S PROVIDED BY OAC:**

All transportation, meals while at the activity site, all activity-related gear and camping and climbing 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.

## **CONTACTS:**

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



## PERSONAL GEAR CHECKLIST

*The specifics of this list will be covered during the pre-trip meeting. Please come with specific questions so you are properly prepared for this trip.*

### Personal Snowshoeing and Climbing Items:

- Mid-weight, waterproof hiking boots (ESSENTIAL FOR SNOWSHOEING, purchased in advance and broken in)
- Synthetic midweight hiking socks
- Synthetic underwear
- Synthetic long underwear
- Gaiters (optional)
- Hiking shorts and/or pants (light & quick drying)
- Synthetic short-sleeve top (1-2)
- Synthetic long-sleeve sun shirt (1-2)
- Rain/wind jacket (waterproof)
- Rain/ski pants (waterproof)
- Fleece or down insulating jacket
- Extra insulation (vest or sweater)
- Bandanna (optional)
- Midweight gloves
- Midweight stocking cap
- Sunglasses (Required)
- Sun hat

### Personal Items:

- Sunscreen
- Lip balm with sunscreen
- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Prescription glasses with straps and/or contacts & case
- Personal first aid kit & small lighter
- Personal medication (e.g., Ibuprofen)/prescriptions
- Pocket knife/multi-tool
- Camera - make sure you can waterproof it!
- Journal & pencil/pen
- Books
- Favorite board game (Required)
- Tampons or pads
- Hand sanitizer
- Blister care (moleskin & duct tape)
- Insulated mug or small thermos
- 2 one-liter water bottles (e.g., 1 large Nalgene® = 1L) or more
- Headlamp with extra batteries
- Watch (with alarm)
- Daypack

**Cabin/Travel Items:**

- Small backpack with car items (books, wallet, etc.,)
- Cabin/shower shoes (old running shoes or sport sandals)
- Medium-sized duffel for personal gear
- Travel clothes for current weather conditions
- Small towel and travel shampoo/soap
- Cash and/or credit card

**Gear That Can Be Provided by OAC:**

- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping pad
- Snowshoes
- Trekking Poles
- Lawn chair
- Kitchen & food supplies
- Maps, compass, & permits (where necessary)
- Bowl & spoon
- Group first aid kits
- Other group related gear
- Ice Climbing gear\*

*\*All ice climbing gear will be provided by Narrow Ridge Outdoors and will be given once we are on site\**

*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.*

**DAILY ITINERARY:** *Please note that this itinerary is just tentative and is subject to change based on the decisions of the trip leaders (Also note that meals marked with an asterisk (\*) are not provided by Outdoor Adventures!)*

**DAY 1 - 3/15/25, Saturday**

7:00AM Meet at Outdoor Adventures, Drive to Upper Crossing Guard Station Cabin (10.5 hours)  
Lunch On the Road\*  
Dinner On the Road\*  
Evening Stay at Upper Crossing Guard Station Cabin

**DAY 2-3 - 3/16/25, Sunday- 3/17/25, Monday**

Breakfast At the Cabin, Snowshoeing in Rio Grande National Forest  
Lunch On the Trail  
Dinner At the Cabin  
Evening Stay at Upper Crossing Guard Station Cabin

**DAY 4-5 - 3/18/25, Tuesday- 3/19/25, Wednesday**

6:00AM Breakfast at Cabin, Drive to Wolf Creek Pass for ICE CLIMBING! (1.75 hours)  
Lunch At the Crag  
Dinner On the Road\*  
Evening Stay at Upper Crossing Guard Station Cabin

**DAY 6 - 3/20/25, Thursday**

8:00AM Breakfast at Cabin, Drive to Great Sand Dunes National Park (1.5 hours)  
Lunch At the Park  
Dinner At the Park or Cabin  
Evening Stay at Upper Crossing Guard Station Cabin

**DAY 8 - 3/21/25, Friday**

Breakfast At the Cabin, Snowshoeing around Cabin  
Lunch At the Cabin, Drive to Ogallala (6.5 hours)  
Dinner On the Road\*  
Evening Stay at Ogallala State Recreation Area

**DAY 9 - 3/22/25, Saturday**

6:00 AM Breakfast at Ogallala SRA, Finish drive to Lincoln (5.5 hours)  
Lunch On the Road\*

Afternoon Arrive at Outdoor Adventures, sort & clean gear (30-40 minutes)