

UNL OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Spring Break Rio Grande Canoeing

Dates: March 13-23, 2025

Pre-Trip Meeting: March 4th from 7:00-9:00pm



LOWER CANYONS INFO: This is one of the best river trips in America in terms of isolation, scenery, and adventure. It may be possible to spend the entire week in the canyons without seeing another person other than those in our own group. This trip will cover 83 miles of the Rio Grande flowing through rugged desert canyons of southwest Texas. We will encounter many small rapids and depending on the water level, a few major rapids, a strenuous portage or two, and a good deal of flat water.

PERSONAL PREPARATION:

UNL Outdoor Adventure trips are designed for beginners and more experienced people. However, even though a beginner could go on this trip, we advise people to take their physical condition and mental preparedness seriously. Canoeing and camping for 8 days can be very physical and to get the most enjoyment out of the trip being physically fit is a crucial part of this experience. Individuals must be mentally and physically prepared for this remote expedition.

TRANSPORTATION:

All transportation is included in the price of the trip. University vehicles will be used as transportation to and from Texas. We will depart from UNL Outdoor Adventures in the morning of Thursday, March 13th

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 necessary! **

Average High Temperature: 75 °F

Average Low Temperature: 50 °F

Sunrise: 7:30 AM

Sunset: 7:30 PM

CAMPSITES:

This trip will require two days of driving to and from the activity site. We will be camping for the entirety of this trip. During the canoeing portion of this trip, we will camp at remote sites along the Rio Grande riverbanks. These campsites

are considered backcountry campsites. Backcountry sites will have no facilities. In the backcountry, we will be carrying out all our trash including human waste. We will cover personal hygiene at the pre-trip meeting.

COOKING AND GROUP TASK:

As with all aspects of this expedition, cooking and camp chores will be a group effort. The group will be divided into teams. Each team will be assigned a task for the day. Some of the tasks could include cooking, setting up camp or doing the dishes for the group. All meals while at our activity 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. Water on this trip will be both from water we brought from our last campsite and water that we will chemically treat from springs we find along the river.

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://lnt.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 can affect others' experiences 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 unwell, it will negatively impact the experience for others. For example, it is important to stay hydrated, to not unnecessarily endanger yourself, and to 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 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. 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. Please, no cell phone use while in the vehicle and note that there is no cell coverage once we get to the river. Thanks!

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.

MORE INFO: Big Bend National Park www.nps.gov/bibe

CONTACTS: UNL Outdoor Adventures Center: (402) 472-4777



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 Paddling and Camping Clothes:

- River shoes (sandals with a heel strap) or old tennis shoes
- Camp shoes (old running shoes or sport sandals)
- Synthetic midweight hiking socks
- Synthetic underwear
- Synthetic long underwear
- Swim shorts
- 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/wind pants (waterproof)
- Fleece or down insulating jacket
- Extra insulation (vest or sweater)
- Bandanna (optional)
- Midweight gloves
- Midweight stocking cap
- Sunglasses
- 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
- Pocketknife/multi-tool
- Camera - make sure you can waterproof it!
- Journal & pencil/pen
- Reading books, Sudoku, cards, etc.
- 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

Front Country Travel Clothes & Gear:

- Small backpack with car items (books, wallet, etc.,)
- Medium-sized duffel for personal gear (we will pack our gear into drybags at the river)
- Travel clothes for current weather conditions
- Small towel and travel shampoo/soap
- Front Country needs: toiletries, prescriptions, etc.
- Cash and/or credit card for meals and souvenirs

Gear That Can Be Provided by OAC:

- Canoe
- Life jacket
- River rescue kit
- Dry bags
- River toilet
- Tent
- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping pad
- Camp chair
- Backcountry kitchen & food
- Water purification & water jugs
- Maps, compass, & permits (where necessary)
- Group first aid kits
- Other group related gear

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 tentative and subject to change based on the trip leaders' decisions! Also, the location of the trip will depend on water levels at the time. If they are low, there will be an alternate location.

DAY 1 - Thursday, 3/13/25

8:00 AM Arrive Outdoor Adventures / Depart for Texas
Dinner On the Road*

9:00 PM Arrive at campsite

DAY 2 - Friday, 3/14/25

7:00 AM Depart Campsite

8:00 AM Breakfast on the Road*

Lunch On the Road*

Late Afternoon Arrive at Heath Canyon Ranch-Put-in for Lower Canyons of the Rio Grande

Dinner At the River

Camping Heath Canyon Ranch, Texas

DAY 3 - 3/15/25, Saturday

Breakfast At our campsite

Morning River School and loading canoes

Lunch On the River

Afternoon Continue Paddle to our first Campsite

Dinner At our campsite/ followed by hiking & camp games

DAY 4 thru DAY 8- 3/16/25 - 3/21/25

Each day will consist of 4-5 hours of paddling, setting up camp, day hiking, cooking, and eating delicious camp meals, and relaxing and enjoying the scenery.

DAY 9 - 3/22/25

Breakfast At our last campsite, paddle to the take-out

Lunch At the take-out

Afternoon Drive to Texas Tech University in Lubbock

Dinner Great food in Lubbock*

Camping Texas Tech University

DAY 10 - 3/23/25

6:00 AM Depart Lubbock, Texas

Breakfast On the Road*

Evening Arrival at UNL Outdoor Adventures

Please note that meals marked with an asterisk (*) are not provided by Outdoor Adventures!