

shuttle.

The shuttle driver will have a roster of the alumni kayak trip participants and will be expecting you—the cost of this ride is included in your tuition. See the trip description for more details on the first day at the branch.

There are no commercial services near our headquarters; therefore, the day before the trip begins you should complete any last-minute purchases, telephone calls (see Phone Services), mailing of letters, etc. We'll have lots to do on the first day, so please eat breakfast and settle your hotel bill before 7:00 a.m.

DEPARTURE:

On the last day of the trip (March 26), we will finish in Loreto that afternoon/evening. The group will have the opportunity to have dinner together at a restaurant of your choosing. **You are responsible for your dinner and accommodations that evening.**

Bad weather could delay the ending of your trip. This is uncommon, but we will always choose safety before punctuality. We will try to the best of our ability to help you make connections. NOLS will inform your family if your trip is late. We can arrange to alter the shuttle times to accommodate changes.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

The NOLS alumni office is located at the NOLS Headquarters, 284 Lincoln St, in Lander, WY 82520. We can be reached at (800) 332-4280. Our email is alumni@nols.edu. Please feel free to contact Willy Cunningham (Alumni Projects Coordinator) directly at willy_cunningham@nols.edu

IF YOU ARE DELAYED ON ARRIVAL DAY:

Please allow adequate travel time and confirm your flight reservations before departure. Flights are often overbooked so seat confirmation is critical. If you find you will not be able to make the pick up at the Hotel La Mision at 7:00 a.m. the day the alumni trip begins, please let our office in Lander know by phoning (800) 332-4280.

If you miss the 7:00 a.m. pickup at the Hotel La Mision we recommend that you get a local taxi or bus and request them to take you to the "Escuela NOLS" at Rancho El Coyote, km. 107, approximately 18 miles south of Mulegé. We're located on the beach at Rancho El Coyote. Look for the kayaks and sailboats in front. This drive is about 1 hour and 30 minutes north of Loreto.

Travel Logistics:

Loreto is about an hour and a half flight from southern California.

Participants are welcome to drive directly to NOLS Mexico or to follow the shuttle vehicle from

the hotel. If you drive you will need to stop and get a tourist visa near the border. Call us with questions. There is space to park personal vehicles and while there is no guarantee of security, all due caution will be taken should you choose to leave your vehicle or rental car in our parking area. If you drive to the Mexico Branch, you will need to return to the Branch with the instructors on the last day to retrieve your vehicle. This may interfere with your ability to eat with the group that evening after the trip actually finishes in Loreto.

Please call for specific directions as there are very few road markers and driving Baja roads can be an entirely separate adventure. Flying is the simplest and most efficient option.

Travel Insurance:

We recommend making travel plans as soon as possible to avoid complications. It may also be beneficial to purchase tickets that are refundable or changeable. Travel insurance is worth exploring in case unforeseen events cause a change in your plans or in case NOLS has to cancel an alumni trip for any reason. Check with your personal insurance carrier to discuss options or contact Travel Guard at www.travelguard.com or (800) 826-4919. The "Protect Assist" program is perhaps best for budget conscious travelers, but it does not cover climbing programs or trips.

STORAGE OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

Keep your luggage to a minimum and avoid bringing anything that isn't in the equipment guidelines. Items that you don't need will get packed up for storage. Although due care will be taken, there may be times during the trip when your gear will be stored in remote regions with little or no supervision. You will need to obtain personal insurance if you wish to be reimbursed for theft, loss or damage of your belongings.

PHONE SERVICES:

NOLS Mexico does not have direct telephone service. Emergency phone calls are forwarded via our Lander Office. We speak via email to the Lander Office daily. If you are in the field it may be days before we can get a message to you.

Once your trip begins, there is no opportunity to make phone calls until the trip ends and you return to Loreto.

You should make any calls before you are picked up in Loreto. There are many public phones most of which operate with pre-paid cards (tarjetas) which can be bought in many stores. Look for the "Ladatel" signs. The international operator can be reached by dialing 09 but usually you can dial calls directly. Most American calling cards can be used but you should check with your company for access codes you might need for calling from outside the U.S. In addition you can make calls from "phone stores" where you pay on completion of your call. These usually have a sign outside saying "Larga Distancia". The "BLUE" phones offering direct service to the U.S. can cost up to \$6.00 a minute.

Despite the many options, sometimes phone calls cannot be made due to line failures in Mexico.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES:

You should bring enough cash to cover all expenses encountered while traveling to and from Loreto, Baja California Sur. These potential expenses include phone calls, lodging costs in Loreto before and after the trip, cab rides to meeting locations, any meals not indicated, and any costs associated with evacuations.

Your tuition includes meals starting with lunch on March 17th, 2010 through lunch on March 26th, 2010. All group gear, safety equipment, instruction, and transportation to and from the Hotel Oasis are included in the trip price.

You are responsible for travel to and from Loreto and for lodging and meals before and after the trip. There are many hotels in Loreto and you may research and arrange accommodations someplace other than the Hotel La Mision.

MONEY EXCHANGE:

Most taxis and nearly all big hotels and fancier restaurants will accept U.S. currency, but you will be better off with local currency. Currency can be changed at banks, money exchanges, many hotels and other places of business. You may need to buy something to get to change your dollars in this manner. **There are foreign currency exchange booths at many U.S. airports including Los Angeles. They won't give the very best exchange rate, but they are convenient. There is also an ATM about a block away from the Hotel Islas de Loreto where you can get local currency.** Be aware that cashing travelers checks in Baja is not always possible other than at banks.

APPLICATION FORMS/TUITION PAYMENT:

Please send your Application, Medical Form, Proof of Insurance Form, and Release and Assumption of Risk Waiver along with a \$200 non-refundable deposit to NOLS Alumni Office, 284 Lincoln St. Lander, WY 82520. These forms and the final balance are due no later than February 5th, 2010.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR MEXICO

TOURIST CARD AND PASSPORT:

Passport – You **must** have a valid passport for the duration of your stay. If you already have a passport, please check the expiration date; passports are generally valid for ten years from the issue date. If you do not have a passport you should apply for one immediately. Ask at your local post office or check the US State Department web site for an application: http://travel.state.gov/passport_services.html We recommend that you leave a photocopy of the

information page of your passport with someone in the U.S. This will facilitate replacing the passport should you lose it.

Visa – To travel in México legally during your course you must have a Mexican FM-T visa (a "Tourist Card") valid for at least 90 days. A visa form will be provided to you by airline personnel when you check in for your flight. There is a \$30 charge for this visa, paid to Mexican immigration. Please be certain you have enough cash on hand. Keep your visa safely with your passport; if you lose it, Mexican immigration will fine you \$40 when you leave the country.

If you are under 18 years of age, you also must have a notarized letter from both your parents giving you permission to travel in Mexico. The airline will want to see this and Mexican immigration will not allow you to enter México without it.

CUSTOMS:

After immigration, you go through customs. They have a green/red light system. If you get a green light, you go through without inspection. If you get a red light, customs will inspect your luggage. If you are carrying prescription drugs we suggest you bring a copy of the prescription. If you have natural medicines or vitamins not in the original container, carry a written description of what they will be used for. This can help avoid misunderstandings.

TRAVEL HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION:

International travel poses special health considerations. NOLS strongly advises that all students traveling to international courses carefully consider what vaccinations or inoculations are required, recommended or suggested for their specific travel itinerary by:

- Consider what country or countries you are traveling to, from and during your course.
- Reading the NOLS trip description for information on where the course will be traveling within the country. Most NOLS trips do not follow the usual tourist itineraries.
- Consulting with a physician, travel medicine specialist or other health care professional.

Regulations and recommendations can change. NOLS suggests some specific inoculations based on information from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, through consultation with health officials in the specific region of the countries where courses are conducted and through our experience in the specific country. The final decision for what inoculations you receive is your responsibility. There are many sources of information and some of the information is contradictory. In addition to consulting with your health care provider the following organizations provide useful information.

- U.S. Centers for Disease Control either via the CDC International Travelers Hotline (404) 332-4559 or their web site at <<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>>.
- International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (IMAT) 417 Center St., Lewiston, NY 14092, (716) 754-4883.

- Shorelands Travel Health Online <<http://www.tripprep.com>>

Inoculations you receive should be recorded in the official document, *International Certificate of Vaccination*, available from the U.S. Public Health Service or from your doctor. This is also a good place to record your prescriptions, eyeglass needs, medical problems such as allergies, and any other information of a medical nature. Please record your blood type in this booklet.

There are no inoculations specifically required for entering Mexico. We recommend that you are up-to-date on all vaccinations normally recommended in the U.S. Please be sure that your tetanus booster shot is current. The U.S. Center for Disease Control recommends receiving the Hepatitis vaccine or immune globulin. Immune globulin should be administered as close as possible to the starting date of your course. We recommend that you consult your physician regarding any specific medical questions that you may have about traveling in Mexico.

TRAVELER'S DIARRHEA:

Diarrhea is by far the most frequent health problem of travelers to Mexico. Traveler's diarrhea is caused by a variety of infectious agents, and the spectrum of clinical illness varies considerably. This illness in travelers, however, is usually not severe, and complete recovery often occurs even in the absence of therapy. We do not recommend prophylactic use of non-anti microbial/anti motility agents (Lomotil, Imodium) due to the possible troublesome side effects. Instead of using an anti diarrhea prophylactic, we recommend that you be careful of what you eat and drink. If problems occur, your instructors will be able to recommend treatment, or assist you in getting medical treatment.