

Course Description

Pacific Northwest Sea Kayaking & Sailing

Features Of This Course:

- Route: 80 to 140 nautical miles
- Emphasis on coastal navigation, tides and currents, wind and waves
- Travel in sea kayaks and 36-foot keelboats
- Varied coastal environment; inland waters, fjords, bays, coves, island archipelagos
- Practice anchoring, boat handling under sail and power
- Opportunity for ashore exploration

The Expedition

If you love being on the water and you're looking to gain ocean experience in two different skill areas then this is the course for you. You will most likely start out by sea kayaking on the west coast of Vancouver Island for the first two weeks of this combination course. The protected waters near Tahsis and the Esperanza inlet will allow you to develop your paddle stroke before heading out around Nootka Island. With pristine beaches and the chance of sighting bears, wolves, seals and whales, this remote area offers one of the more beautiful areas for this introduction to expedition sea kayaking. The second part of the expedition takes you to the east side of Vancouver Island where you will board two thirty-six foot sailboats and head out to explore the Strait of Georgia and the Gulf Islands. Here you'll learn to sail as you go and have classes on boat handling under sail or power, charts, coastal navigation, and seamanship. You'll cook and sleep on board and rotate crew positions to give everyone a chance to experience the responsibilities of life on the water. You'll anchor at peaceful inlets and explore some of the area's remote islands. You'll observe the diverse life of tidal pools, read tide tables and marine charts, identify ocean hazards, and learn about the fascinating early human history of the region. Life on the sea can include cool, wet weather as well as the brilliance of blue sky and distant snowy peaks.

Please note: It is possible you will begin with the sailing section and then move on to the sea kayaking section.

Weather and Other Challenges

British Columbia has a maritime climate and the weather can be variable. Wet and windy weather and rough seas are not uncommon. However, flat calm is the setting at times, too. In any situation, it is a beautiful area. There are times when you may be wet, cold or tired; an objective of this course is to learn to manage these situations responsibly and with minimum discomfort. You'll be miles away from the amenities of civilization. Telephones, ambulances and hospitals may be several days away.

Identifying and managing the hazards of wind and waves, rocky shore-lines, fog, shallow water, swell, currents, open crossings, animals, cold water, and long stretches of exposed open coastline will be a constant theme in our instruction. The consistent practice of risk management techniques and assumption of responsibility for yourself and other group members will help make your expedition in this coastal environment healthy and enjoyable.

Leadership and teamwork will be stressed on this course. You'll find that strong friendships will develop as you learn to work together and depend upon each other for well being, and comfort. Learning to be a contributing member of an expedition can be a challenge, but it can also provide immense personal rewards and is an essential trait for competent wilderness travelers.

Personal Electronics

A key element to a NOLS education is time spent in wilderness. The benefits of this include being closer to nature, time away from society and civilization, and being in an environment where natural forces predominate and students have the opportunity to develop good judgment and practice self-reliance. NOLS does not permit students to use personal cell or satellite phones or other communication devices including personal tracking devices (e.g. SPOT), while in the field. Additionally, students are not permitted to take personal music players (iPods, MP3 players, CD players, etc). Instructors will be carrying sufficient communication equipment (usually a satellite phone) to handle any emergencies that may arise.



Behavior on the Expedition

Each person's values, beliefs and actions affect those of the rest of the group—balancing these is an important part of expedition behavior. We want you to have a positive and safe learning environment. Therefore we expect all students to respect the values and beliefs of other members of the expedition. The best expedition members have positive attitudes, apply new skills and ideas at the first opportunity, and come motivated to work hard with people they have never seen before. They care about others, put the welfare of the group up equal to their own, and understand that an expedition succeeds when all its members complete each day responsibly. If you feel your values or beliefs are not being respected, by NOLS' staff or students, it is essential that you speak up so the issues are addressed.

Student Independence

On all NOLS courses students will be independent (unaccompanied by instructors) at various times. This will include time on board such as while cooking or performing camp chores. Instructors may allow students to travel away ashore. Students often have independent unsupervised time, usually in town, before and after their course starts.

Coastal Sea Kayaking/Sailing Course Syllabus

Risk Management and Judgment

- Cold Injuries/Hypothermia
- ABC & Patient Assessment
- Shock
- Soft Tissue Injuries
- Burns
- Emergency Procedures
- Gender Specific Concerns

Outdoor Living Skills

- Waste Disposal/Sanitation/LNT
- Personal Hygiene
- Campsite Selection/LNT
- Tent & Fly Pitching
- Stove Use & Care/Repair
- Basic Cooking
- Nutrition & Rations
- Sea Food Gathering/Red Tide
- Baking
- Staying Warm & Dry
- Water Disinfection
- Bear Camping
- Fishing Equip. Use & Care
- Ocean Fishing

Environmental Awareness

- Plants of BC Coast
- Land Animals of BC Coast
- Inter-tidal Critters and Ecosystems
- Marine Mammals
- Ornithology
- Astronomy
- Wilderness Ethics
- Land & Water Issues
- History of BC Land Use
- First Nations of BC/Kwakiutl
- Geology of BC/Glacial landforms
- Local History

Leadership

- Leadership Concepts
- Outdoor Teaching Techniques
- Expedition Behavior
- Group Facilitation Skills
- Conflict Management
- Communication Skills

Traveling Skills

- Charts
- Ocean Hazards
- Tide/ Current Tables
- Weather/Frontal Systems
- Weather Forecast /VHF Radio Use
- Compass Use with Navigating
- Range Lines; Dead Reckoning
- Wind & Wave Dynamics
- Passage Plans
- Gear Packing
- Boat Packing
- Boat Parts & Care
- Terminology

Sea Kayaking Skills

- Basic Strokes
- Advanced Strokes
- Capsize Recovery
- Towing
- Launching and Beaching in Surf

Sailing Skills

- Boat Handling Under Sail and Power
- Crew Overboard Recovery
- Sail Theory/Sail Trim
- Points of Sail
- Boat Systems



Course Objectives

Each course is unique due to variables such as route, group dynamics, fitness levels, and environmental conditions. Working with these variables, it is our intent to accomplish the following outcomes:

Risk Management and Judgment

NOLS prepares instructors to teach and practice responsible habits that promote the health and well being of self and others. Each student is expected to accomplish the following outcomes:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the capabilities of a sea kayak/cruising sailboat and crew with respect to near shore coastal travel
- Describe and consistently perform specific techniques to reduce or avoid hazards inherent in coastal travel
- Demonstrate proficiency at effecting crew overboard drills and be familiar with emergency and distress procedures
- Develop a basic understanding of boat handling and tactics in heavy weather
- Understand how to obtain and use weather and marine hazard forecast
- Be able to provide emergency and extended medical care appropriate to a remote wilderness setting using available resources
- Use experience and judgment to implement sound decisions and follow them through to completion and conduct them in a safe manner ashore
- Understand and work within NOLS risk management policies and procedures

Leadership and Communication

Students are exposed to the theory and practice of outdoor leadership, teamwork and expedition behavior. At NOLS, expedition behavior involves commitment to the group, a positive attitude and cooperation to achieve goals. We expect each student to accomplish the following:

- Lead the group in planning and carrying out a passage
- Maintain a reasonable level of vigilance and initiative in the care and handling of the pod/vessel and crew
- Demonstrate teamwork to the benefit of the group
- Responsibly fulfill duties inherent in care and maintenance of the boats
- Appropriately communicate ideas and concerns on individual and group levels
- Accurately identify strengths, skills and areas for growth in developing outdoor leadership styles in self and others
- Display appropriate initiative in a teaching/leadership role with peers
- Demonstrate effective problem-solving and planning skills
- Provide effective oral and written feedback
- Display an awareness of group strengths and limitations

Outdoor Skills

Students are expected to live, travel and guide others in the outdoors within a framework of risk management and care of the environment. Each student is expected to accomplish the following:

- Live comfortably in a coastal environment: camping, cooking and dressing for varied conditions
- Travel competently on ocean using appropriate navigation, hazard evaluation and rescue techniques
- Accurately assess skills, strengths and endurance in self and others and conservatively apply those limits to given situations
- Demonstrate the knowledge and skill necessary to cruise safely as competent crew in moderate wind and sea conditions
- Display basic natural history observation and interpretation skills

Environmental Ethics

Students develop an awareness of how to apply *Leave No Trace* ideas to their lives beyond the course. We expect each student to accomplish the following:

- Consistently practice and teach sound *Leave No Trace* living and traveling skills
- Use basic observation and interpretive skills to develop an understanding and respect for natural systems
- Demonstrate and convey an understanding, appreciation and respect for the natural world on the water and land
- Describe how to facilitate the transference of wilderness ethics and practices to daily life



Wilderness Education Skills

A NOLS Educator Course prepares students to be wilderness educators as well as wilderness leaders. Each student is expected to accomplish the following outcomes:

- Demonstrate the ability to effectively teach basic outdoor living skills
- Demonstrate knowledge of environmental and risk management concerns and their influence on learning in the wilderness
- Be an exemplary role model of a responsible and effective wilderness educator
- Demonstrate motivation and enthusiasm in the pursuit of learning
- Be effective in presentation and utilization of learning opportunities; adapting to the variables of the course

NOLS Pacific Northwest Reading List

Many students enjoy reading related books before arriving at NOLS. Those of you who are interested will find, below, our book recommendations appropriate to courses in the Pacific Northwest. Any of these books provide a taste of what you will learn and experience at NOLS. Afterwards, they will be excellent resources when planning your own wilderness outings.

Suggested For All Courses

The National Outdoor Leadership School's Wilderness Guide. Mark Harvey. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999. 256 pp.

The classic backpacker's handbook - revised and updated with information on new equipment and techniques - providing expert guidelines for backpackers, hikers, campers - anyone who loves the outdoors. Illustrated throughout with instructional drawings and photos and featuring lists of equipment, the Wilderness Guide is a must-have for anyone planning to explore the great outdoors.

The NOLS Cookery. Claudia Pearson, editor. Fourth edition. National Outdoor Leadership School Publication, 1997. 160 pp.

Chock full of tasty and surprisingly varied recipes, this little book accompanies every course into the field. Chapters on rationing and nutrition offer helpful tips for planning weekend trips or full-length expeditions.

NOLS Wilderness First Aid. By Schimelpfenig and Lindsey. Third edition. National Outdoor Leadership School Publication, 2000, 356 pp.

This text will give you a sound foundation upon which to build your wilderness first aid education, help you prevent accidents and illness, and enable you to become a more confident outdoor leader. It is based on the authors' 30-plus years of combined experience in wilderness first aid and on the cumulative experience of the instructors at NOLS.

Soft Paths. By Bruce Hampton and David Cole. Third edition. Stackpole Books, 2003. 240 pp.

NOLS staff has put together a readable and practical guide to getting around in the wilderness without degrading it. Perhaps the most useful single volume. This new edition includes materials developed from 30 years of field experience and research.

The Final Forest By William Dietrich. Reprint edition. New York: Penguin Books, 1993. 303 pp.

The definitive book on the Old Growth Forest issue. William Dietrich, the Pulitzer Prize winning chief science correspondent of *The Seattle Times*, takes us on a journey through the lives of the people affected by this intense struggle. Focusing on the human side of the debate, *The Final Forest* offers a sensitive exploration of our connection to the Earth: of all we cherish, and all we exploit.

The Good Rain: Across Time and Terrain in the Pacific Northwest by Timothy Egan. Reprint Edition. New York: Vintage Books, 1991. 254 pp.

Egan succeeds in capturing the richness and beauty of the Pacific Northwest (and it's possibly imminent destruction) with rich description, appropriately chosen and reported interviews. His travels take him from manicured gardens in essentially English Vancouver, B.C., to Indian reservations in western Washington, to the proud rural communities in eastern Washington, and visits to the precipitous peaks and brooding volcanoes of the Cascade Mountains.



Cascade-Olympic Natural History. By Daniel Mathews. Second edition Portland: Raven Edition, 1999. 640 pp.

Field guide for two spectacular mountain ranges. In lively prose uniquely combined with accuracy and depth, it goes far beyond simple identification of plants and animals. Enjoyable reading just by itself. More than 700 species are described; they are illustrated with 320 color photographs and 240 drawings.

Suggested for Sailing Courses

Start Sailing Right by D. Fries

The Elements of Seamanship by R. Taylor

Book Sources

Ordering by Mail

NOLS Mail Order

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Lander, WY 82520

P: 1-888-332-3636

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