

Backpack Oregon's Cascade Mountains

Due to the many variables of outdoor trips, it's impossible to describe exactly what the trip will be like but this will give you a sense of what to expect. Questions? Get in touch at: outdoors@lclark.edu

About the Location:

This trip travels to Bull of the Woods Wilderness, about 70 miles southeast of Portland against the western slope of the Cascade Mountains. This unique wilderness area is relatively undisturbed by logging operations. Here, huge Douglas fir, western hemlock, and western red cedar tower over an understory of huckleberry and rhododendron, providing habitat to elk, black-tailed deer, and the legendary spotted owl. As one naturalist has said, "if you like forests, this is the place to be." There are few places left in western Oregon that can match the pristine, untouched beauty of this ancient forest.

What to Expect:

The first day of your trip you'll drive to the trailhead and head out down the trail for your first night in the backcountry. On the last day of your trip, we'll pack up and head back to Portland the evening before New Student Orientation begins. The Bull of the Woods Wilderness is about a 2.5-hour drive from Portland. For five days you will backpack through ancient forests dripping with moss, take in striking views of the seemingly endless cascade mountains, and play in cool mountain streams. You will be carrying a backpack that will weigh somewhere between 30 and 50 lbs., depending on your weight and your physical condition. The trails are rated easy to moderate, with elevations ranging from 2,400 to 5,558 ft. On the average, the group expects to hike about 5 miles a day wearing backpacks, with a possible layover day in the middle. Not everyone in the group will want to hike at the same speed, so we'll do what is best for the group when it comes to routes, campsites, and day hikes. We practice minimum-impact camping techniques such as packing out all litter and food waste, not using soap in streams or lakes, or camping on fragile meadows. We'll go over these practices before we head out. All trips are non-smoking.

New to backpacking?

No problem! This trip is designed for beginners. And we have ideas to help you get ready (read on).

How to Prepare:

- **Prep for the pack:** borrow a pack, fill it with 4-gallon (1 gal. = 8 lbs.) jugs and take a walk! It will feel heavy at first but don't worry - it gets easier!
- **Break in your boots:** new boots + long treks = painful blisters. It is *very important* to break in your boots by wearing them with a pack for extended periods prior to your trip.
- **Get moving:** it's a great idea to walk or run this summer to get yourself into shape.

What will we eat?

We eat well in the backcountry! Some examples of typical meals include: curry, pizza, mac & cheese.

We resupply water from streams and lakes. Our treatment (filters or tablets) neutralizes Giardia, bacteria, and viruses.

What if I don't have outdoor clothing or equipment?

No problem! Check out our packing lists (located on your trip page) for a description of the essential and optional gear for your trip. If you don't have your own outdoor clothing or equipment, we provide what you'll need for free. You must request the equipment ahead of time using this form: <http://tinyurl.com/c4d5g2r>

What are the risks?

The most common injuries which could occur on this trip are blisters on feet (don't forget to break in your boots), and burns from not applying enough sunscreen. *These are all preventable with a little caution and common sense.* Yellow jackets (wasps) can be pests at this time of the year, and people with the potential for severe reactions to stings should plan to bring their own anaphylaxis kits. Learn more about possible risks [here](#). All our trip leaders are trained as Wilderness First Responders.

Complete and return the online [Health & Diet Questionnaire](#) to inform our trip leaders of any conditions or illnesses that you have.