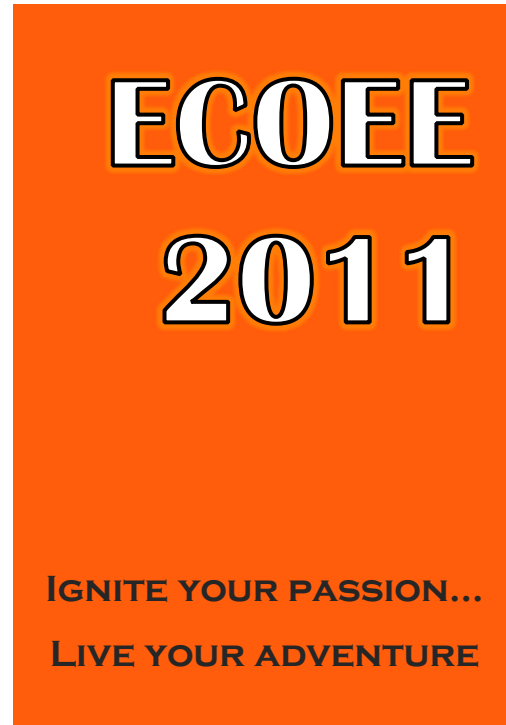




THE PLACES WE HAVE BEEN AND THE THINGS WE HAVE SEEN:



TRAVELING THE WEST!!!

What's New with ECOEE...?

Hey there ECOEE followers!

Dear family and friends back home; we have all missed you dearly and have tons of stories and pictures to share with you when we return home. After our mid-course evaluations at Horn Field Campus, we headed out on the road. These past few weeks while cruising around North America, the scenery has just been simply amazing and the mountains are mesmerizing here in the west.

From hiking mountains to trucking the trails of beautiful National Parks, we are quickly making our footprints all across the west. Bison and bears, wolves and prong-horned deer, pikas and prairie dogs are just a few of the many animals we have seen thus far.

The more miles our group go's, the closer we become as a family. Don't be surprised when your Ecoeeian offers to make a meal for 14 people or prefers a sleeping

bag over their bed, or even if they come back as a dedicated coffee drinker.

Not only is it hard to get along with 13 other people, but it's nearly impossible to get along without them. Now that we have surpassed the halfway marking of our expedition, looking back at the ups and downs we wouldn't have them any other way! Enjoy reading our stories and see you soon!

Love and Peace,
ECOEE 2011



What do you think?

These are Jeff's most said words...and though he is one tough chief, you all know a Grizzly Bear becomes a Teddy Bear when you get to know him. Got to love it!



Learning from the Best

Learning from each other, learning in a classroom without any limitations, and only the open road ahead.

Life in the front country and life in the backcountry differ tremendously, but they have similarities as well. When it comes to processing and planning we will always have an end-of-the-day goal and throughout-the-day objectives we wish to achieve regardless of where we are. If we're in the front country some of our objectives may be to visit and tour certain facilities and observe how each one is ran, or maybe there's a food buy that we need to do because we have a new line of chefs coming in and they need the ingredients for the delicious meals their going to prepare. The backcountry is a little different because although each day will consist of goals & objectives they will be more consistent throughout the days. When we're in the backcountry we have a final destination we want to end up at within the amount of time we're given. In Canada we had 18 days to travel 180 km so the goals and objectives of each day would be to let anyone who wants to give a lesson do so and then we would travel X amount of kilometers depending on what day of the expedition we were on and how many kilometers we had left.

When we're in the front country we're a lot less dependent on our outdoor living skills...or at least we're not nearly as conservative with the things we have since we've got garbage & recycling at our disposal and Wal-Mart stores in pretty much any town we go to so we don't need to plan a rations list in the front country like we do in the backcountry. When we're in front country we still stay in tents and campsites so having the technical skills of tent set up and take down



is essential. Navigation skills is a big must-have in both front and back country, if we're driving from the Grand Tetons to Yosemite we want to know the best way to get there and how long it's going to take. In the backcountry, if you don't know how to navigate, you can count on your trip taking a lot longer than anticipated because you're very likely going to get lost and end up in a place you did not intend on going.

Risk management is a constant factor to pay attention to regardless of the area you're in; however, the risks between the two areas differ greatly. Let's take bear care for example, when you are in the backcountry and it's known to be bear country you would want to put up a bear hang before bed. This consists of putting everything that has a smell to it (toothpaste, sunscreen, lip balm, etc.) in a bag and hanging the bag from a tree with a rope.

The bag should be 12 feet off the ground and 6-10 feet from the closest tree trunk and 5 feet below the branch it's hanging from. When we're in the front country bear care consists of putting all our things that smell inside our trailer and locking it up before bed. As you can see, there's two completely different ways of managing risk in back and front country but they're potentially doing the same thing.

-Brandon Wessels

“Go where your heart takes you,
and let your moral compass do
the rest.”



*You will never possess
what you are unwilling to
pursue - Mike Murdoch*

The question I am asked is in what ways have the expedition thus far benefitted me, and what knowledge have I gained relating to outdoor environmental education? Well so far I have learned a lot, I have learned new subject matter, re-learned some, or have found new and interesting facts about this subject. I have learned them from my peers, our teacher, grad-assistant, and by visiting all the places we have been to so far. All the new knowledge is beneficial, even the old. You begin to realize how complex life really is, how fragile it is, how everything is intertwined, you get a new appreciation on your surroundings and instead of walking by everything around you,

you become more aware and stop to appreciate all the little things we miss through the fast paced lives we live. We have learned a little bit of everything. We have had lessons of astronomy which is not the same as astrology, we have learned about trees, geology, weather, ecosystems of North America, birds of North America, we have learned about scats and track (animal poop and there tracks), habitats and homes, invasive and endangered species, predator and prey relationships. It sounds like a lot! And it is, and we still haven't covered it all, but slowly and surely we will get as much information in about these subjects. You ask how this will help us, well it will make us aware of our surroundings, and answer

questions why is this happening, what makes it happen this way, in what ways does it influence our surroundings, and how it affects us or how we affect it. To give you folks an example of this, I'll tell you a little about hot springs. How many of you thought a hot spring was just a bunch of hot water that comes out of the ground? Well it is more than that! It is a bunch of hot water, it does come out of the ground, but it also is its own micro ecosystem! It is filled with life, and the research from them has contributed to our lives, giving us new advancements in DNA research. These hot springs are filled with single celled organisms, like bacteria, fungi, archea, and many more. They are called thermophiles these organisms love the harsh conditions they live in. They are a bunch of different species, which live in these pools in giant populations, and form different communities, and interact with each other just like you and I do. The colors are influenced by the water temperatures, the pH levels, the types of organisms they are. There are many more factors that influence these springs, but I hope this gives you an idea of how complex everything is around you, and this kind of information is what we are learning. The question was how has outdoor environmental education benefited has me, well it has made me aware, it has taught me the history of this type of education and how it has influenced America. I hope you enjoyed the little bit of education in this article and I hope you are more aware of what exactly we are doing on this trip besides traveling.

- Corey Frantz

So far as we have visited many different facilities throughout North America, I have learned that there are a variety of jobs with different focus that we as Recreation, Parks, and Tourism students can become involved in. All of us on this expedition are here for different reasons but one of the reasons I am here is to learn about what area of recreation I would soon like to be a part of. This education expedition has helped me already in doing that. Not only have I learned some more about myself and will learn even more before I make my way home in late November but also it has helped me narrow down my options. Because this major is such a broad topic it gives me the opportunity to do anything I wish as long as I present the knowledge and passion for it.

I know I am not the one to work in an office therefore by visiting facilities such as Camp Confidence, NOLS, Outward Bound,



Laurentian, and a few National Parks, it has shown me the many ways places could be run.

For instance, Camp Confidence focuses on creating opportunities for disabled individuals to take time to go in the out of doors and do what others think they may not be capable of. The staff is there to provide people with a safe environment to grow and learn by using sensory awareness to connect the individual to the environment.

Outward Bound and NOLS focus more on expedition travel to gain survival, leader, decision-making and other outdoor skills for those who are interested. Laurentian was more of an environmental center camp like set up. There was a team course and various activities for people of all ages to participate.

The location and acreage of each facility has its own unique aspect. Outward Bound has within its facility room to provide a team's course, a dogsled yard, and a finely thought out equipment center. The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) was set up in a way that seemed more business-like, with offices for each department within the program. There was a separate building for each area and spread throughout the town of Lander, MN. Laurentian was set up like a camp with lodging and a dining hall, as was Camp Confidence. By touring these facilities and listening to the many types of recreation folk it helps me to see what I like and dislike about each. By comparing and contrasting the various places it is easier to see where I could fit in and what I need to do to get into a possible position like that in the near future.

Not only do I feel more knowledgeable in that aspect but in the whole learning the skills of the outdoors, I became more confident in doing those skills. It is one of those things where friends and family from home may try to understand the whole concept of ECOEE, but unless you are along for the ride and are a participant, you can never truly understand it or us.

- Brittany Abrams

RANDOMNESS



This is How We Do It!

Above: Hiking in Badlands NP
Below: Upper Falls in Yosemite NP



FAST FACTS

99.9%

Of us on ECOEE miss all of you from home and cannot wait to see you in November!

98%

Of ECOEE students are RPTA majors...This explains our complications we all have with math. Hence, the one person who does not struggle with the subject is an Ag. Business major! Thanks for all your help, Sarah, but we figured this statistic out all by ourselves!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit us online at:

ecoe.blogspot.com

or

<http://www.wiu.edu/RPTA/ecoe/>



“You cannot look serious when having fun.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

IN THE MINDSET OF AN ECOEEIAN:

- **WAKING UP MOST DAYS BEFORE THE SUN IN THE COOL MORNINGS IS NORMAL**
- **EH, DAY ELEVEN WITHOUT A SHOWER...NO BIGGIE**
- **WHAT TIME IS CHOW?**
- **DEBRIEF TONIGHT**
- **WHO HAS THE CHORE LIST?**
- **WHERE IS THE WASH STATION?**
- **WHO IS SLEEPING WITH ME TONIGHT?...OKAY, QUICK, GRAB THE MSR TENT!**
- **HAS ANYONE SEEN MY...? (NALGENE, CLOTHES.ETC.)**
- **WHAT WOULD JEFF DO?**
- **WHO HAD THE TROWELL LAST?**
- **WHAT'S FOR DIN DIN?**



Paul Petzoldt, the founder of the Wilderness Education Association (WEA), is quoted saying “Rules are for fools.” By this he means that every decision is situational and that there is no set of rules to follow when trying to make a decision. Petzoldt recommended ‘smoking a cigarette’ when making a decision. This would give a person adequate amount of time to consider their options, instead of rushing to a conclusion.

There are two types of decisions: simple and complex. A simple decision can be made when the challenge is clearly understood, the choices and options are fairly obvious, the amount of time is adequate to contemplate each option, and the decision and its outcomes are not life changing. Simple decisions can often be made by the leader without any input from the group. A complex decision is where one runs into the most hesitation. The outcomes are more uncertain, so the group members often want to have a say in the decision making process.

This is where judgment comes into play. It can help fill in the gap of missing information. Petzoldt said, “Judgment can be defined as the ability to make and execute quality decisions in a timely manner.” Without judgment, one may be contemplating a decision for hours on end. Judgment can be gained from previous experiences and then applied to current situations. Intuition also plays a part in decision making. Sometimes one may experience a gut feeling and will not have any reasoning or explanation behind it. Intuition can aide in decision making, but it is impossible to learn from and to try and teach to others.

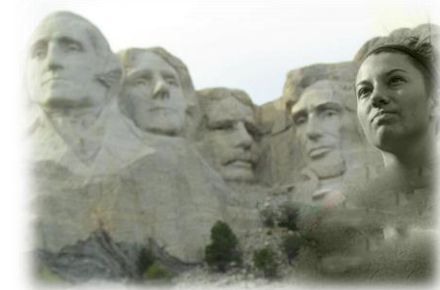
Each individual has their own way of decision making and problem solving in our group. Some of these decisions might be of the simple variety, such as when and where we are going to stop for lunch, how long of a break we should have, and what we should wear. In these situations little time is spent deciding what to do and the outcomes will not have much variation. When complex problems arise, much more time is needed to determine a solution. We have faced many different situations, like whether or not to run our canoes through the rapids, portage them, or line them; how fast and how far to hike; and when it is time to get off of the river, due to inclement weather conditions. These decisions are more difficult to make because there are more variables involved in the outcomes. Safety must be the highest

priority when making complex decisions. Often times, group members will provide their input and help the leader come up with a solution.

I have learned a great deal about decision making and problem solving from my experiences as leader of the day (LOD) here on ECOEE. Much of this stems from reading the group and seeing where they are at physically and mentally. Knowing when to carry on and when it is time to call it quits is essential in decision making. The LOD has many responsibilities, such as taking care of the group, completing the tasks at hand, and anticipating what is to come. One must be on their toes and always thinking about what needs to be accomplished next.

When asking Jeff questions, he will quickly yield a “what do you think?” He pushes me to make my own decisions and become an effective problem solver. When faced with a complex decision, Jeff says to “know what you know and know what you don’t know.” My group decision making skills are improving and I plan for them to continue to do so for the rest of ECOEE. I hope to transfer what I have learned about being an effective decision maker and problem solver back to my everyday life, after ECOEE comes to an end.

–Sarah Heller



When considering our nation’s most inspiring monuments, many come to mind. Of the many places we can identify with our country, one that quickly comes to mind is Mt. Rushmore of South Dakota. Not only is it a giant artistic sculpture, it represents many important periods of history in this country. Another monument that is often overshadowed by Mt. Rushmore is the Crazy Horse National Memorial. The ECOEE students were privileged to visit both of these epic places on their westbound route.

Mount Rushmore is a federally funded National Monument operated by the National Park Service. Immediately upon arriving there it is easy to see that the facility is well maintained and carefully planned out. This monument receives large amounts of funding from the National Park Service and is able to update and modernize their exhibits. The facility features a gallery of sculptures, a museum, and some restaurants. Also, there are multiple trails around the grounds which can be self-guided or utilized by park rangers on guided tours. The museum exhibits are a bit extensive and might bore the average tourist, but who can complain much about this great monument when people are really visiting for the view. Presidents Lincoln, Roosevelt, Jefferson, and Washington have been standing guard over the Black Hills of South Dakota ever since it was carved out of the granite hillside. Only faint lines can be seen where cracks have formed and been repaired, otherwise this large sculpture continues to represent our nations freedom and independence.

Just seventeen miles down the road stands the work-in-progress sculpture, Crazy Horse Memorial. Unlike its neighbor Mount Rushmore, the Crazy Horse Memorial's main attraction is not the mountain side sculpture, but the International Museum of Native American Culture that lies within the visitor center. Since the memorial does not accept any money from the federal government, all revenue is generated by its visitors. This causes the museum to be the greatest importance at the facility since it draws in visitor revenue. The monument itself is not anywhere near being completed. There is still much work to be done as the projected completion date may not even be in this lifetime. Also since the mountain side is technically a construction zone, guided trails near the base of the monument is not an option. One unique option for visitors is that they are able to actually watch the construction happen from a viewing deck

outside the museum. The memorial is modeled after a great Native American Chief who led his troops into battle and it represents another group of heroes in this nation. Perhaps one day the sculpture will be



complete and the world can marvel at its massive beauty.

Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse National Monument are great monuments representing both native and modern American heroes. These giant sculptures preserve part of this nation's memory and vivid history and are great reminders of our once great leaders. Hopefully one day the Crazy Horse National Monument will be complete and in a more viewable condition.

Although it is a unique experience to watch such a monument being built, its incompleteness is also its demise. Many visitors want to see a complete sculpture, such as Mount Rushmore, and therefore do not add the memorial to their travel destinations. This catch twenty-two is the reason the monument takes so long to complete. No one wants to pay to see something incomplete, but it cannot be completed

Hopefully one day sooner rather than later, both of these monuments will be complete and thus be more competitive and comparable.

- Monica Gummow

In 1905 the first national forest was established in Wyoming called the Shoshone Forest. This started the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). We got to visit with Joe Harper who has worked for the USFS for many years as a wildlife biologist and now he is a supervisor for the Shoshone forest. He shared with us many interesting facts about the USFS and for an added bonus he answered

many of our "agency visit questions" for our Perspectives of Outdoor Recreation homework.

There are 155 national forests and 20 grasslands in the United States which covers a total of 193 million acres. Shoshone has 2.4 million acres from sagebrush plains to rugged mountains this land is protected from development and secures the animal's habitat. There are 150-200 grizzly bears in the forest and there are 16 packs of wolves! Wyoming is trying to de-list the wolves from the Endangered Species Act so they can be hunted by next year. Ranchers hate these animals because they kill their livestock. There are more than 40,000 cattle grazing in this national forest and there are 4 to 5 wolves removed from the forest a year due to cattle attacks.

Joe Harper went over the differences of national parks and national forests. National Parks are strict about conservation while national forests promote wise use of the land. National forests allow fire wood cutting and national parks get their fire wood from the national forest and do not cut their own. Both parks and forests have rangers that



work for the agency to protect the land and wildlife. The rangers are very different today than they were in the past. Historically they scouted the forests on their horses, wearing leather gaiters and billed hats, looking for fires and chasing off those pesky timber thieves. The rangers were mostly loggers, miners and local cowboys and they all had to pass an exam to work for the park or forest. Shockingly he explained to us that it is a lot easier to become a ranger today than it was back then.

-Molly Corrigan



Everyday ECOEE

Here is a look into the mornings of the typical ECOEE expedition. The cooks here actually have the advantage of daylight, a rare sight for most mornings. When preparing food for breakfast, the cooks must be up early before the sun comes up to get a head start on the day.



“People come into your life for a reason, season, or a lifetime.”

week the students take on more responsibility, using their knowledge they learned on the previous week each student leads the group on their own during the day. This week has little instructor intervention they stand there and watch and give you feedback during the nighttime. By the third week, NOLS students are completely alone with the group during the day while the instructors are gone. The days are spent hiking and working together as a group, but at the end of the day the instructors come back to camp for the night. By the fourth week the students are on their own for 3-6 days with the instructors about a mile up the trail the whole time. This is where you apply everything you've learned on the previous weeks and lead the group. I believe this to be a great formula; it slowly eases the students into the leadership role, but does it in a timely manner. Week by week you get more responsibility, and each week forces you to use your prior knowledge to better yourself, and the group.

Not only learning how they structure their trips, but also learning how they deal with issues such as risk management was very helpful. Risk management is a huge deal with a company like NOLS, especially with the way they structure their trips and have students lead a group of other students with no supervision from the instructor. But they reduce this risk, by providing them with the skills that they need to know before handing the group over to the students. Also the instructor is camping a mile away and must know exactly where the group is camping every night. NOLS gives the instructors the choice on whether the group is ready for a final (a week leading each other) and how many days it can be.

Knowing how an adventure recreation facility manages its risk is very beneficial for me, because in our 449-Management of Outdoor Adventure Recreation we need to make a 10-day trip plan for seven students. All these factors are now things that I must take into consideration while planning my trip. I've also learned that each group that you take into the back country is different and needs to be lead differently, so being able to adapt and implement different styles of teaching is very important in helping the students grow to their full potential as outdoor leaders.

- Tony Beyer

After visiting Adventure Recreation providers such as the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), and Outward Bound, I have gained immense knowledge on each programs specific missions and the way they go about planning trips. Outward Bound is a public adventure recreation program that holds courses anywhere from a week to 89 days. They have an emphasis on outdoor leadership, but they provide courses for adjudicated and at risk youth. NOLS on the other hand is a little more specific of who they accept on to a course. For NOLS you can't be just out of rehab, been arrested or have any sort of major character problems. NOLS is also based on outdoor leadership, but more geared around learning the physical skills such as being able to take bearings on a compass, learning how to set up belays for climbing or paddling correctly.

NOLS main course is four weeks long and they break it down by week. The first week, the instructors work with the students to get them acclimated to the back country and teach them the basic skills to camping/hiking/paddling. This week is completely led by the instructor. The next

happens in a day. This can be extremely stressful since the rest of the group looks to the LOD for leadership and every movement made by the LOD and ALOD is not so silently judged by Steve, our grad assistant, and Jeff, our instructor.

Decisions that would be made instantaneously if we were on this expedition by ourselves or with a small group of friends suddenly seem like life or death situations that must be extensively deliberated over when the judgment factor is added in. By making decisions that affect the entire group, we are supposed to learn to be better outdoor leaders. At some point we are supposed to stop relying on help from Jeff and Steve and, an even more difficult task, we are supposed to stop worrying about what Jeff thinks about the decisions we are making.

Over the course of our journey, some leaders of the day have had more difficult decisions to make than others. For example, once when Katy was leader of the day in Canada, we had some terrible weather to deal with and she had to decide when it was bad enough to pull off of the water. This decision was made more difficult by the fact that if we did not get far enough that day we would have a difficult time finding a camp site but if we stayed on the water and the weather got too bad we would have a seriously dangerous situation to deal with. You can read the September 3, 2011 entry on our blog to find out what ended up happening on that day (<http://ecoe.blogspot.com>).

Other LODs are faced with easier decisions that turn into hard decisions. Jeff has a tendency to ask LODs questions about what they are doing or decisions that are trying to make to get them to think hard about them. On one of my LOD days in Canada, I was caught in one of Jeff's over thinking traps. On this day, we were going to stay at the campsite we had found the night before all day to complete student lessons. The hardest decision I had to make all day was what time we would start the day. It seems like such a trivial thing to decide, but knowing that Jeff thinks we should start very early to not waste daylight and also knowing that everyone was exhausted from all the work we were doing made it an incredibly difficult decision for me. In the end I went against Jeff's opinion and decided to have the first lesson begin at 9:00. I was terrified about going against Jeff, but in the end it was just what the group needed to raise their spirits and have time to get some homework done. The biggest lesson I learned from that day was that sometimes it is more important to worry

Being the leader of the day is one of the most stressful aspects of ECOEE. For those of you who do not know, there is a chore rotation we follow that consists of ten different jobs. At the top of the list are the leader of the day (LOD for short) and the assistant leader of the day (ALOD). The two people assigned to these roles work as the two halves of the brain that makes all of the decisions for what

about what the group needs than what Jeff thinks about you.

Through the experiences we all are having as LOD and ALOD we are all becoming better decision makers. Deciding what problems are mountains or molehills is still a challenge for some of us, but we have all improved a lot. We are all training to become better outdoor leaders, and having good judgment and decision-making skills is a huge part of that.

- Jennifer Longshore

I have learned from Outward Bound and NOLS that a lot goes into producing and maintaining an Outdoor Adventure Recreation program. Each Organization has different ways they manage the programs, and each has similar ways to manage their programs. I found, however, NOLS is more closely related to our own program of ECOEE. They employ the similar curricular and food preparation strategies. They employ a four week standard curriculum for a 30 day course in which during week one, students are taught the necessary skills by the instructors, week two, the students perform and teach those skills under the instructor's eye, in week three the students are on their own during the day, and during week four, the students are on their own day and night. Meanwhile, the instructors manage risk by staying within a mile during week three, and during week four, the length of time for the independent group expedition is based upon the instructor's discretion and where they see the group, as well as being within a mile. Their food preparation for the rations is similar to ours as well.

The students are sent a list, and are able to pick and choose the amounts they desire of each ingredient they want. However, if the instructor deems the amount too extreme, they will have the student amend their rations to help balance nutritional needs within the cook groups. Each program group is broken up into cook groups, in which each person will cook a meal using each participant's ingredients and each member of a particular cook group will sleep in one tent. They urge people not to go with friends because the program is supposed to be a learning and bonding experience, and if the friends are there, there is more of a



tendency to form cliques and separate other group members.

Outward Bound has many programs available, from children to businesses to veterans, each with their own set of guidelines and parameters. For instance, in a normal program, there is no smoking allowed, while on a veteran's program there is smoking allowed within certain areas. All programs take the participants into consideration, as well as the organization the participants may go through. If a half-way home sponsored troubled teens to go to Outward Bound, the program would be tailored around the goals the half-way home is trying to accomplish by sending them to Outward Bound, such as rehab from drugs or alcohol, and building trust and communication between the members, and becoming leaders. Outward Bound manages the members all throughout the program, regardless of whether it is a weeklong program or a month long program.

I plan to integrate some of the styles and management practices into my own trip plan, such as the curriculum structure and food preparation strategy from NOLS, while I would employ an Outward Bound style of a tailored set of guidelines I would personally like my students to follow, while if there is an organization, incorporating their goals and guidelines as well. The styles of each program differ, but each is unique and important to the Outdoor Adventure Recreation field.

- Heather Carlberg

Gazing out across a tremendous valley filled with trees far below my feet with a beautiful waterfall flowing in the distance, I never would have imagined that this picturesque sight would become my classroom. The term classroom conjures dusty chalkboards enclosed by four walls, but in the field of Outdoor Education the name says it all. Of course some subjects practically have to be taught inside of a classroom, such as math and reading. But what about those subjects that don't include a right or wrong answer? Subjects like team building, problem solving, outdoor living skills and basic sciences are all subjects that cannot be taught in a classroom, but belong in the outdoors.

Facilities like Outward Bound and Teton Science School in Jackson, Wyoming, are two leading examples of experiential learning in the field of Outdoor Ed. Instead of keeping students seated in a classroom with lectures,

both of these facilities practice hands on, experiential learning where students not only learn but connect with their subjects.

Outward Bound is famous for its backcountry courses instilling leadership, outdoor living skills, and group dynamics within their students. Although it would seem like backcountry traveling isn't educational, the subjects taught can be used for a lifetime. Building leadership skills with a group of individuals can be transferred into the workplace for future use, an important skill for young people to have in today's job market. One never knows when fire building skills will come in handy, thus knowing how to properly start and maintain a fire is key to survival in a wilderness setting. Perhaps the most powerful learning experience found on a course is the development of group dynamics. All of a sudden, a collaboration of individuals suddenly becomes a group working for a common goal and then a family.



This is our classroom...

Teton Science School is a little different than Outward Bound in its courses, but still keeps the experiential learning rolling. Every week a new bus load of children from the Jackson area, or across the country, rolls up and attends Teton Science School. Once at Teton, the students are introduced to an entirely new form of schooling. Instead of writing on a chalkboard the importance of wildfires for regrowth, students actually get to experience the process for themselves by starting controlled fires and seeing the regrowth process from previous fires. Instructors at Teton Science School often take their students out into the field and introduce them to their subjects first hand. Everything from what a moose eats to the

tiny organisms living in a puddle outside a classroom's backdoor, Teton Science School strives to make every experience not only educational, but important in their students' academic career.

Learning doesn't have limitations, so why should education? By simply removing the traditional classroom element from a child's mind, educators open so many more doors for their students. Leadership cannot be taught; it is something that must be experienced and then modeled. Science isn't black and white, but rather experimental and includes reactions in order to see its outcomes. Outdoor Education isn't just play time, its learning with a twist.

- Katy Hunt



It seems as if it's a common trait at the facilities we visit that their goal is to educate rather than advocate, but what do they mean by that? Education is the process of giving intellectual, moral, and social instruction to someone and advocating is the public support of a policy or particular cause. However, there are obviously some facilities we visit such as the National Parks, non-profit programs, and other government funded agencies that are obviously stating their position on public policy without even really saying it. Facilities such as the National Parks (like Yellowstone) come into direct conflict with other agencies like the National

Forest Service that lies on the outer boundaries. One of Yellowstone's main goals is to preserve all the natural resources and other things the park has to offer for people to see for generations to come, while the National Forest Service does things such as log trees and sell hunting licenses for a more multi-use approach. Although we learned a lot from our visit at the National Forest Service, the real educational opportunities lie within the park boundaries of Yellowstone.

Yellowstone not only offers a variety of ranger talks at every major location within the park, but they also include interpretation. They facilitate other outdoor education programs such as their Jr. Ranger, Expedition Yellowstone, Wildlife Olympics, and other very successful programs that not only educate participants, but also engage them in thrilling activities that improve their cognitive, physical, and psychological development. In the Wildlife Olympics program for example, participants test their physical abilities against those of an



animal native to the park. This program has very high, on the spot, enlistment which obviously means people are interested prior to even seeing what they are going to do. The rangers do a very good job of attracting people into these programs and they don't just educate, they take a subtle approach to facilitating in programs like Expedition Yellowstone. This is similar to how Jeff teaches us. He gives us the final before the exam, so we always have to be ready.

Another program that takes a "Jeff" like approach would be the National Outdoor Leadership School, better known in short as NOLS. The reason they have a "Jeff" like approach is due to the fact that this is where Jeff learned to be Jeff. What I mean is, the godfather of our program, Paul Pezoldt, the man who taught Jeff all he needed to know, started this school in 1965 with the ideals that as a

course progressed, the instructor involvement should become less and less. The original 30 day course Pezoldt designed was divided into four week sections which consisted of the first week revolving on teaching all the technical skills needed to survive, the second week was used to polish and hone these skills, the third week took a withdrawn instructor approach during the day with the instructor returning at night, and then by the fourth week students should have been ready to do it all by themselves, and if they weren't, well somebody would be in trouble. It's hard to fathom picking up all these abilities in under a month, when we are on day 46 and from time to time, still have some difficulties. However, we are starting to form norms within the group and forming a cohesive educational and experiential bond. This is the experience of a lifetime, learning all the different ways people teach and facilitate at these nationally recognized facilities. I almost never want it to end!

- Justin Morris



"If you wait to do everything until you're sure it's right, you'll probably never do much of anything."

-Win Borden



