

Leave No Trace Level 2 Instructor Course

Yellowstone Backpacking

Course Description

Course Features

- Duration: 5 days
- Dates: June 8 - 12, 2026
- Location: Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming
- Route length: 10-20 miles
- Average pack weight: 35-45 pounds
- Meeting location: 8:00 am at Mammoth Community Center, Mammoth Hot Springs, WY.

Course Overview

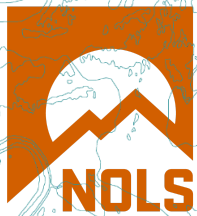
For five days in this rich ecosystem, you will learn and teach the principles of Leave No Trace and discuss wildland ethics. Your group will be a mixture of federal agency personnel, outdoor educators, guides and outfitters, outdoor retailers and private individuals. Courses are instructed by a NOLS instructor and agency instructor from the National Park Service (NPS), both of whom are Leave No Trace Level 3 instructors.

The course will meet at the **Mammoth Community Center at 8:00 am on the course start date**. It is highly recommended that you arrive at the Yellowstone Hot Springs Campground the night before where we will have sites available.

The backcountry portion of the course begins the second day, and you will spend the next four nights in the field. Hiking distances will be short to moderate and mostly on established trails, though some portions of the route may be off-trail. You will likely hike each day, but much of your time will be spent in classes and discussions.

Weather will vary, with temperatures ranging from nighttime lows in the 30s to daytime highs in the 60s. Rain, thunderstorms and even snow are common at this time of year.





The course ends the afternoon of the last day of the course. To allow time for cleaning equipment, completing evaluations and awarding diplomas, please plan to depart **no earlier than 2:00 p.m on the final day.**

Course Agenda (subject to change)

➤ Day One

- Course begins at 8:00 am
- Introduction to the Level 2 Instructor Course, history of Leave No Trace, role of research in Leave No Trace
- Principles of Education
- Principle One: Plan Ahead and Prepare

➤ Day Two

- Breakfast, packing, shuttle to trailhead/put-in; travel to first camp
- Principle Two: Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Principle Three: Dispose of Waste Properly
- Introduce "Action Plans"

➤ Day Three

- Breakfast, break camp, pack up, and evaluate impact; travel to second camp
- Principle Four: Leave What You Find
- Principle Five: Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Principle Six: Respect Wildlife
- Work on "Action Plans"
- Introduction to Trainer Course Material

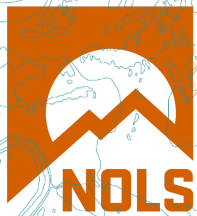
➤ Day Four

- Breakfast, break camp, pack up, and evaluate impact; travel to third camp
- Principle Seven: Be Considerate of Other Visitors
- Wildland Ethics
- Share and discuss "Action Plans"

➤ Day Five

- Breakfast, break camp, pack up, and evaluate impact
- How to run a Leave No Trace Trainer course





- Course Evaluations
- Final thoughts
- Travel out, award diplomas, course ends

Curriculum

The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics has designated NOLS an educational provider of Level 2 Instructor Courses. NOLS brings over 50 years of experience teaching wilderness skills and leadership to the Leave No Trace Program.

Level 2 Instructor courses are informative, practical, hands-on and fun. You will learn skills and teaching techniques through lectures, skits and discussions in a spectacular outdoor setting. The course is designed for people who actively teach others outdoor skills or provide recreation information to the public. It emphasizes three components:

- low-impact camping skills
- wildland ethics
- outdoor teaching techniques

Teaching Sessions

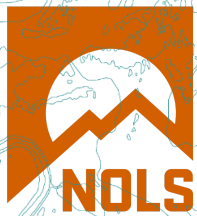
Each participant will be required to present a short (15-20 minute) class on one of the Leave No Trace principles or how it relates to a specific activity, such as rock climbing or mountain biking. The class can be skills-oriented or theoretical in content. Although some preparation time will be available once the course has begun, plan to prepare your class **before** arriving at the course location.

If you have questions regarding class presentations, please refer to the teaching information on the LNT website www.lnt.org or contact the NOLS Leave No Trace office at lnt@nols.edu or by calling (800) 710-NOLS ext. 2720.

Environment

Rescue Creek, Blacktail Deer Creek and the Black Canyon of Yellowstone are located in Yellowstone's northern range, a vast expanse of low elevation grassland often called the Serengeti of North America for its abundant wildlife. Bison, elk, mountain lions, gray wolves, grizzly bears and black bears frequent the area. Elevations for the course will range from 5,400 feet to 7,000 feet.





You will start hiking through sagebrush grasslands lined by open meadows and stands of Douglas fir and aspen on your way to the Yellowstone River. There will be plenty of signs of the wildlife and you will be rewarded with spectacular views as you follow the Yellowstone River through the Black Canyon.

Food and Equipment

You will cook and sleep in groups of 2-3 and come together as a single group for class presentations and discussions. Camping in small groups allows participants more opportunities to learn and practice Leave No Trace techniques.

Group equipment, such as stoves, shelters and cook gear will be provided by NOLS and/or the course host (refer to your equipment list for details on personal equipment). Food for the field portion of the course consists of typical NOLS rations including rice, pasta, grains and cereals and a variety of snack foods. Dry staples are supplemented with fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and cheeses. If you have special dietary needs please notify the NOLS Leave No Trace office.

Enrollment Forms

The following forms are available on your NOLS dashboard

<https://www.nols.edu/portal/account/> and must be completed and received by the NOLS Leave No Trace office prior to the start of the course:

- Self-Screening Health Form
- Insurance Form - all course participants must have some form of medical insurance
- Student Agreement

All tuition payments should be completed and enrollment forms uploaded to your dashboard.

Should you need to mail anything to NOLS, please do so at:

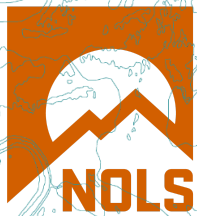
NOLS Expedition Admissions

ATTN: LNT

284 Lincoln Street

Lander, WY 82520





Scholarships

For information regarding Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics scholarships, please contact the Center for details at 800-332-4100.

Payment and Cancellation Policies - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

Course tuition is **\$1,100.00** and includes a one-year individual membership to Leave No Trace, instruction, group equipment, meals and educational materials. Partial scholarships are available through the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. Please contact the Center for details 800-332-4100.

To enroll, a completed application and a \$275 non-refundable deposit are required. The balance of tuition is due 75 days prior to the course start date. For applications within 75 days of the course start date, tuition is due in full with the application. **The \$275 deposit may be waived for scholarship applicants until the scholarship amount has been determined.**

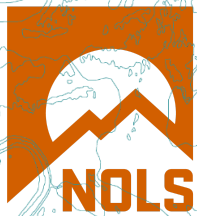
CANCELLATION POLICY:

If you cancel or leave for any reason we will retain the non-refundable deposit or the following percentage of tuition, whichever is greater:

- Between 15 and 29 days prior to the course start date, NOLS will retain 25 percent of the course tuition
- Between 8 and 14 days prior to the course start date, NOLS will retain 50 percent of the course tuition
- Less than 8 days prior to the course start date or after the course has begun, there will be no refunds

Course transfer requests may incur a \$25 processing fee.





Travel and Logistics

Start Time and Location

The course will meet at 8:00 am at the Mammoth Community Center, Mammoth, WY.

Travel Information

By Car

- From North: On I-90 take exit 333 south through Livingston and down Highway 89, 55 miles to Gardiner and continue on to Eagle Creek Campground..
- From South: Drive north through Yellowstone to Gardiner, MT then to Eagle Creek Campground..

While on your course, you may travel to / from the course road head in non NOLS vehicles. These may be government vehicles and / or carpooling in student / staff vehicles that may or may not be rental vehicles.

By Plane

The nearest airports are in Billings or Bozeman, Montana and are serviced by Frontier, Alaska, Delta and United Airlines.

Lodging

There are numerous lodging options in Gardiner, Montana. Check the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce at www.gardinerchamber.com for a comprehensive listing.

In Case of Emergency or Delays

Contact NOLS Headquarters in Lander, Wyoming at 800-710-6657.

Questions concerning course content, enrollment, college credit, etc. should be directed to the above address, or you may call between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm MST, Monday through Friday at 307-335-2220 or by email at Int@nols.edu.

