

Rio Grande Canoe Expedition

Travel and Logistics

We are so excited to have you on your NOLS course!

Course Start

Arrive	Before 6pm (the day before your course start date)
Meeting place	El Paso International Airport (ELP) Baggage Claim Area
Meeting time	Please arrange all travel (air and/or ground) to allow you to arrive at the El Paso Airport before 6:00 pm on the day before your course starts.

Flight Destination

Airport	El Paso International Airport, El Paso, TX (ELP)
Date	Arrive the day before your course start date

Flight Return

Airport	El Paso International Airport, El Paso, TX (ELP)
Date	Depart the day after your course end date

Ground Transportation

From airport to NOLS	A driver from NOLS will pick you up at the El Paso Airport.
From NOLS to airport	A driver from NOLS will take you to the El Paso Airport the morning after your course.

Accommodation

Before Course	You will spend the night camping at Franklin Mountains State Park
After Course	You will spend a night camping at Franklin Mountains State Park

Prepare to Travel to Your Course

(Further details following)

1. Submit your health form on your [Dashboard](#) as soon as possible. Once NOLS clears it, you can start booking travel.
2. Book your travel
3. Complete and submit Travel and Logistics form on your [Dashboard](#)
4. Complete the following [Google form](#) to alert NOLS SW of your travel itinerary so they can arrange and communicate shuttle times.
5. Consider Tuition Protection coverage (see [Dashboard](#), highly recommended)
6. Check your medical insurance coverage will be adequate for your travels and expedition activities
7. For International Travel:
 - a. Check that your passport is valid for the appropriate dates
 - b. Arrange visa and/or parent letter if needed
 - c. Notify your bank/credit card company that you will be traveling internationally
 - d. Get cash in local currency
 - e. Prepare for important cultural considerations
 - f. Get inoculations as required
8. **Contact NOLS Admissions:** 800-710-6657 / admissions@nols.edu (Save our contact info so you have it while you travel!)

Further Details:

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Welcome to NOLS!

The following information provides some details on course logistics and planning your travel to the Southwest. We look forward to meeting you at the start of your course and hope the following information will help you arrive with a minimum of difficulty and expense.

Course Start

Please wait to make travel plans until after the NOLS Admission office clears your health form. Your course will begin at the **El Paso International Airport** on the day prior to your course start date. Please fill out the following [Google form](#) with your travel itinerary. A NOLS staff member will let you know what time to meet in the baggage claim area. After a brief introduction they will transport you to the Franklin Mountains State

Park to begin course activities. Given the need to start orientation please arrive before 6pm on the day prior to your course start.

Pre and Post-Course Lodging

NOLS will provide camping at Franklin Mountain State Park the night before and the last night of your course.

Airport Shuttle Options

NOLS SW will pick people up at the El Paso Airport. Please complete the following [Google form](#) to tell NOLS SW your flight information.

The First Few Days

The first few days will be very busy. You'll start by meeting your instructors and fellow expedition members.

Then you will spend the first evening and the next morning getting ready for the course. This will include an orientation, getting the gear you need, and packing. Then your course will drive to the put in.

The Last Day

On the final day of the course you'll be transported back to Franklin Mountain State Park. Upon arrival, you'll clean all the group equipment used during the course and return any rental gear. During this time you'll also have an opportunity to purchase equipment or souvenirs from a mobile store. After lunch, you'll debrief your course experience with a member of the NOLS Southwest administration. Later that afternoon, staff and instructors will join you in celebrating your success. There will be a graduation dinner where diplomas are awarded.

The following morning, a NOLS SW driver will drop you off at the El Paso Airport for your departing flight.

The last day will be very busy. Do not plan to depart from El Paso until the morning after the course end date.

Receiving Mail

Because this course is held entirely outside of the NOLS SW campus, you will not be able to receive mail during your course.

Other Communications and Contact

There will be limited cell service during your travel to and from the river. As a NOLS student, you will not be able to be contacted by phone or receive email while on the river. NOLS does not permit students to carry their own personal smartphones or personal locator beacons (e.g. Spot, Fast Find, inReach) in the field. In the event of a serious emergency at home, all efforts will be made to contact you in the backcountry.

Travel During Your Course

Please note that you may pass through a Border Patrol checkpoint while traveling to and from your course area in NOLS vehicles. Non-U.S. citizens should be prepared to carry original personal identification documents throughout the duration of their course, including while in the backcountry. U.S. citizens may carry a photocopy. Check with your instructors before departing for the field if this applies to your course.

Luggage, Valuables, and Vehicles

Carry essential items onto the plane with you, including prescription medications and retain your baggage claim stubs. These are important tools for tracking any missing luggage. Upon your meeting NOLS SW staff or instructor, promptly inform them if you are missing luggage.

NOLS SW staff will safely store any excess luggage while you are in the backcountry. Please try to limit items to one or two duffel bags or suitcases, as space is limited. Your valuables (i.e., plane tickets, credit cards, electronics, and money) will be returned to NOLS SW and stored in a locked cabinet. Although due care will be taken, **NOLS assumes no liability for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property while in our care.** You may want to obtain personal insurance to cover such items.

Prescription Drugs

If you are taking prescription drugs or other medication of any kind, please make sure they are listed on your health form and that you inform your instructors during your orientation meeting on the first evening. This includes epinephrine for allergic reactions. If you are prescribed epinephrine, make sure you bring it even if you have not needed to use it before. Such information and medication could be critical in an emergency situation. You should plan to bring extra doses of essential medication with you in case some is lost or damaged in the backcountry.

Miscellaneous Expenses

You are advised to bring enough cash and/or credit cards to cover miscellaneous expenses encountered while traveling to and from El Paso. These potential expenses include the occasional stop along the drives to and from the Rio. **Suggested minimum: \$100**

If Delayed

If your arrival to El Paso is delayed and you are not able to make the initial meeting time, please do the following:

1. Rebook for the next available flight.
2. Then, contact NOLS Southwest to let us know of your new plans at **(520) 749-0955**.

Emergency Contact During the Course

Should your family experience an emergency and need to reach you, they should contact the **NOLS Admission Office at (800) 710-6657 or admissions@nols.edu** between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. MDT. The main office number at NOLS Southwest is (520) 749-0955.

NOLS Administrative Headquarters

All tuition payments and completed enrollment forms should be sent to: NOLS, 284 Lincoln St, Lander, WY 82520. Questions concerning course content, enrollment, college credit, physical fitness, or other course matters should be directed to the above address, or please call the NOLS Admission office at (800) 710-6657 or admissions@nols.edu between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. MDT.