



Opal Creek Expeditions: Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q: How does early bird registration work?

A: Early bird registration will be open from December 10th, 2024 to January 31st, 2025. Come February 1st 2025, all Expedition prices will rise.

Q: How does waitlist work?

A: Once a trip is fully booked with 10 participants, we close registration and open up the waitlist. Waitlist will be a first come, first serve basis. Those who sign up first will be notified first and down the line.

Q: I have to cancel at the last minute, can I transfer my trip credit to next year?

A: Unfortunately, no. We do understand that life happens, and sometimes you cannot make your expedition. We have a 60 day refund policy and recommend you get trip insurance if this is a concern. Currently, we do not have the capacity to transfer funds to next year's programming.

Q: Is drop off at the same location as last year?

A: Yes! We can meet you at the trailhead or at our shuttle pickup location. Please view your confirmation email you received after registration for more details.

GEAR AND FOOD

Q: What do I bring on the expedition?

A: Please view our [packing list](#). We provide the group gear while you pack your personal gear, though we have a robust gear closet with gear you can borrow.

Q: What meals are provided?

A: On the first day of drop off, lunch is provided. Every day of the expedition afterwards all three meals and snacks are provided. The day of pick up, lunch will also be provided.

Q: I have a food allergy! Can I come?

A: Yes! Make sure you fill out the intake questionnaire as completely as possible. We will follow up with a phone call to further discuss how we can accommodate.

Q: My pack is sooo heavy!! What should I do?

A: A rule of thumb for backpacking is that active adults can carry up to 20% of their body weight. Participants can expect to carry 10-15 lbs of gear provided by Opal Creek which is gear the group will utilize as a whole such as water filters, pots, group food, tents, etc. Make sure when you meet up with us on the first day of the expedition, you leave enough space for group gear. If you are having trouble fitting everything you need, we suggest cutting some items based on your comfort. Some good suggestions would be not bringing excessive recreational items (books, games, etc), only bring 1-2 pairs of clothing (if the weather is nice you only need 1 or 2 shirts!). If you are still having trouble, don't worry the first day of the expedition we go through packing backpacks as a group and can make some decisions then.

Q: How big should my backpack be?

A: You can expect to carry between 30-45 lbs, depending on your pack, your size/strength, and the length of the trip. We recommend a backpack between 55-70 liters depending on your size.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND PARTICIPANT HEALTH

Q: Who are the guides? What are their certifications?

A: We staff every expedition with two professional and fun guides. All our guides are certified to at least a WFA (Wilderness First Aid) standard and at least one guide per trip has a WFR (Wilderness First Responder). On all our trips there will be at least one woman guide. We pride ourselves on employing guides from all backgrounds!

Q: What do you do if someone gets COVID during the trip?

A: We are monitoring COVID-19 guidelines from the CDC, the State of Oregon, and the Oregon Health Authority. We are fortunate to be operating almost entirely in the open air with little to no time indoors. During the trips we sanitize all cookware and eating utensils every morning and evening. If symptoms of COVID-19 were to occur while on trail, our guides are trained Wilderness First Responders who will help the participants evaluate the situation. Our guides carry COVID-19 rapid tests in their first aid kits and would test in the field any person demonstrating symptoms. Based on this evaluation,

we will communicate with parents/guardians and evacuate the affected person or group to be transported home.

Q: What happens if there is a wildfire in the area? Do I get a refund?

A: The US Forest Service is in regular contact with Opal Creek Expeditions, and they make us aware of any wildfire threats to our course areas. Should the US Forest Service advise that we reroute due to wildfire, we will move the expedition to a comparable wilderness area and inform you of the change via email. In the rare case of a wildfire starting while on the trail, we would evacuate our course area.

For all previous wildfire incidents, we've been able to reroute to an unaffected National Forest. We try to communicate reroutes as soon as possible. Refunds will not be issued in case of a reroute.

Q: What happens if there is smoke in the area?

A: Another occurrence could be the rerouting of a trip due to hazardous levels of smoke or high AQI levels. If there is consistent poor air quality in the operating area of an expedition, we will reroute to another part of Oregon that is experiencing better air. Luckily we operate in 6 wilderness areas all across the state, so a reroute is almost always possible. In the situation where we have an expedition in the field and smoke suddenly onsets and doesn't clear, we would evacuate the trip and reroute to another area. Research has shown that masking in hazardous levels of smokey air quality does little to reduce the impacts, so evacuation is our best precaution.

Q: What do I do if I have a question not answered in this FAQ?

A: You have many opportunities to connect with us! We will call primary contacts one to two weeks prior to the expedition for last minute questions and concerns. Also, as always, you can reach out to us by email at expeditions@opalcreek.org or phone at (503) 892-2782 ext. 1.