

# Northeast Trip Leader

## Course Description

Combine your passion for wilderness with your passion for education in this short, intensive opportunity for professional development in the wilderness. If you're a current practicing trip leader seeking to join a group of like-minded, motivated peers to enhance your leadership skills in the wilderness, this is the course for you.

### Features

- Duration: 9 days
- Route length: 30-45 miles
- Average group size: 8-10 students / 2 instructors
- Average age: 32 / minimum age: 18
- Average pack weight: 40-50 pounds
- Elevation range: 1,200-5,300 feet
- Hike in the heart of the Adirondacks' rugged High Peaks area
- On- and off-trail hiking
- Forest and mountain travel in black bear habitat
- Opportunities to summit several Adirondack "46ers" (peaks over 4,000 feet)

### Overview

Lace up your boots and step into the rugged beauty of America's oldest wilderness. On this course, you'll learn intermediate and advanced camping and travel skills to thrive in the mountains.

Your course begins with the basics—camping, cooking, map reading, stove use, Leave No Trace techniques, and sanitation—skills that are the foundation for leading backpacking trips of your own. You will then progress to more advanced topics, including off-trail travel and stream crossing. You will learn about interpretive natural history topics, including wildflower identification, weather, and local ecology, in trailside "teachable moments" as opportunities arise. You may even have the opportunity to work with a land manager on a small, backcountry, service project.

First aid training is necessary for outdoor leaders. We request that participants come to this course having prior certification of at least a basic first aid course. This background knowledge allows us to make the best use of our time in the backcountry, focusing on the topics best learned in the field.

This course prepares participants to lead backpacking trips, and participants typically have diverse backgrounds and experience levels. This course is not meant to be a certification or a guide training course, but rather an opportunity for trip leaders with backcountry experience to learn and share information about leading trips.

## Weather and Other Challenges

### Weather

Mountain weather is unpredictable. On any given day, temperatures may range from below freezing to sweltering. Thunderstorms are common and can be dramatic. Courses may experience snow and rain, or long stretches of sun and blue skies.

### Terrain

Travel in the mountains can be tough. Often you'll be hiking on muddy, steep trails or off-trail bushwhacking through thick forests. Routes may have wooden ladders in place to assist you through a steep section of trail. Rivers are sometimes challenging to cross. Wilderness travel is tough, but it's worth it when you see just how much you can accomplish.

### Remoteness

For the duration of your course, you'll be miles from the amenities of civilization. Telephones, ambulances, and hospitals may be days away. All NOLS instructors maintain wilderness medicine certifications and are equipped with well-stocked first aid kits to provide care in the event of an emergency.

### Wildlife

The area your course will travel through is home to black bears. NOLS, in collaboration with bear biologists, has developed specific practices to minimize the risk of a bear encounter. Your instructors will teach these practices to you and you will have to follow them every day. Bear avoidance practices may include carrying bear deterrent pepper spray, meticulously maintaining cleanliness at the cooking sites, not having food in tents, and practicing proper food storage.

## Learning Goals at NOLS

NOLS courses teach wilderness and leadership skills on expeditions and in classrooms. You will apply these skills to challenges in a supportive learning culture with high expectations. Your course will provide you with the opportunity for a positive, transformative experience intended to inspire you and empower you to act.

We craft NOLS courses so graduates will be able to assume leadership roles; live and travel in the outdoors; act with confidence and competence; respect and collaborate with others on expeditions, on teams and in communities; care for themselves and others; understand their strengths, habits, and areas for growth; function under difficult circumstances; make informed and thoughtful decisions; communicate effectively; connect with natural places; and appreciate living simply.

*We believe positive, ethical leaders change the world. Join NOLS and become one of these leaders.*