



## 2020 Sample Itinerary Wilderness & Conservation: The American West

**Sept. 20** Students arrive at Denver International Airport by 2 pm, drive to Leadville, CO

**Sept. 21 – 22** Program Orientation: Leadville, CO

**Sept. 23 – Oct. 8** Wilderness Expedition in the Sawatch Range, Colorado

The semester begins with a two-week backpacking trip deep in the Rocky Mountains. While travelling over rugged terrain, the group builds a base of wilderness travel skills. Learning backcountry cooking techniques, map-reading and off-trail navigation, and managing the risks inherent in mountain environments, students develop the foundational skills they will use for the rest of the semester. Along the way, the group may do several days of service work and summit one of the 14,000-foot peaks that form the skyline of the route. Additional activities will emphasize building a strong community, discussing the value of wilderness, and reflecting on effective leadership.

**Oct. 9 – 16** Base-camp in Moab, Utah

The group will establish their base-camp for the week just outside the town of Moab, a hub of outdoor adventure in the West. Here, they start to settle into the routine of base-camping, cooking on double burner stoves with food kept fresh in coolers. Days are spent working with Trail Mix, a local non-profit who does trail work on the many multi-use recreational trails in the area. In addition, students will spend several days climbing to learn the technical skills needed for their upcoming canyons expedition.

**Oct. 17 – Nov. 5** Canyons Expedition in Bears Ears National Monument

Students then embark on a two-week technical canyons expedition in the White Canyon and Dark Canyon complex. Here, they will explore the labyrinth of deep slot canyons and wide open mesas that form this otherworldly landscape. Set within the boundaries of Bears Ears National Monument, this area is also home to amazingly rich cultural history. Students will have ample time to explore remnants of an ancient time and discuss the national controversy surrounding management of Bears Ears. Students will also spend a few days working with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance on a backcountry service project.

**Nov. 6 – 11** Backpacking in Paria Canyon Wilderness

The Paria Canyon-Vermillion Cliffs Wilderness spans across the Utah and Arizona border. Students will spend 5 days hiking through one of the southwest's best canyon-backpacking destinations—sought after for being one of the longest, continuous, and most dramatic slot canyons in the world. The canyon ends at the Lee's Ferry, at the bottom of the Marble Canyon section of the Grand Canyon. We will have the opportunity here to study the history of the



Grand Canyon's impact on conservation and recreation on all public lands within the United States.

**Nov. 12 –17** Rafting the “Diamond Down” Section of the Grand Canyon

Taking a break from carrying all our gear on our backs, students will float down one of the most iconic stretches of river in the world: The Grand Canyon of the Colorado. Traveling through the Hualapai Tribal Lands grants the chance to explore the tensions between federal lands and native rights. The group will launch at Diamond Creek and take 5 days to travel down this final section of the Grand Canyon before exiting at Lake Mead.

**Nov. 18 – Dec 6** Student Planned Expedition in the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, Arizona

Kofa National Wildlife Refuge contains the Castle Dome and Kofa Mountains, which rise sharply from the flat lands of the Sonoran Desert. Here students will hike through Saguaro cacti—some reaching upwards of 50 feet high. The “Student Planned Expedition” draws on all of the skills practiced and refined through the semester. Students will be given specific parameters and resources to plan the trip, as well as designate specific roles within the group to share leadership and responsibility. While here students will also complete a 24-36 hour solo and write their Full Circle, a reflection of what this semester has meant for them.

**Dec. 7** Course closing and transference: Phoenix, AZ

This final day is spent celebrating the community and providing closure for the course.

**Dec. 8** Course concludes in Phoenix, AZ. HMI will provide transportation on this day to the Phoenix Sky Harbor International airport; please review additional travel information below.

*Please note that this is a sample itinerary. The dates and locations are subject to change.*



## 2020 Wilderness & Conservation: Updated Travel Information

### **ARRIVAL:**

**You should plan to arrive at Denver International Airport (DIA) before 2pm on the day your course starts.**

Enrolled students will receive an email with additional guidance on recommended precautions for COVID-19 before and during travel to HMI several weeks before the course begins.

### **Driving**

If you choose to be dropped off at DIA, you should plan to arrive at DIA sometime between 10 am and 2 pm.

Some students may drive directly to HMI's campus. If you choose to do this, please plan to arrive between 4pm and 6pm. Please note that we have strict guidelines for visitors on HMI's campus as part of our COVID operation plan.

A further note on student vehicles:

HMI has limited space for students to store their cars. If you plan to leave a car on HMI's campus, please notify us as soon as possible. HMI cannot be held responsible for any damage to your personal vehicle while you are on course. Additionally, we cannot permit students to use their personal vehicles for any reason once the course has begun. While there may be a few opportunities to access items stored in your vehicle, you should plan to keep everything you will need for the semester with you for the course. **Finally, you will need to arrange transportation back to HMI's campus after the course has ended to pick up your vehicle.**

### **Flying**

If you choose to fly, we will be glad to meet you at the **Denver International Airport (DEN)**. We will be meeting flights that are scheduled to arrive between **10 AM and 2 PM only** on the day your course starts. From the airport, we'll load the van and drive to HMI.

The Denver International Airport consists of three separate concourses and the main terminal. All concourses are serviced by an easy-access, underground rail system that takes passengers from their arriving concourse to the terminal. The train is free and departs every 2 minutes. The train trip from the furthest concourse (Concourse C) to the terminal takes approximately 5 minutes.

When you get off the plane, follow signs to the train that will take you to the Main Terminal and Baggage Claim. Exit the train at the terminal, and take the escalator up one flight to the atrium of the terminal. This is the Ground Transportation and Baggage Claim level. HMI Gap faculty members will be waiting for you in the center of the Great Hall with signs and wearing HMI clothing. From there, we will help you gather your baggage (please meet us **before** looking for your luggage).

If you cannot arrive at Denver International between 10 AM and 2 PM, you may need to arrange for ground transportation to our orientation site. (Please contact HMI for more information).



### **Important Information to Have with You**

You will want to carry a calling card number or a cell phone and a few telephone numbers with you on the day you travel:

High Mountain Institute office	719-486-8200 (press 0 to get the faculty on duty)
Denver International Airport Information	303-342-2000
Denver International Airport paging	303-342-2300

If you are having trouble finding the HMI faculty at the airport, please call the High Mountain Institute office first before trying anything else.

### **COURSE CONCLUSION:**

**You should arrange to depart the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport after 2pm on the day your course concludes.**