



PO Box 7067, Denver, CO 80207 | 303.447.1076 | www.CottonwoodInstitute.org

REGISTRATION FOR CI TRIPS MUST BE COMPLETED ONLINE BY SIGNING OUR RISK RELEASE FORM

Thank you for registering for a Cottonwood Institute (CI) Overnight Camping Trip. This course information packet is designed to answer all of your questions about a basic CI course, please refer to specific information from your class for all of the details about your trip. If you have additional questions, feel free to call us anytime at **303.447.1076 x701** or via email at **madeline@cottonwoodinstitute.org**. Please make sure you read through your registration packet cover to cover before contacting us with questions.

PLEASE NOTE: In order to complete this registration, you must fill out the online form with a specific link for your class. Ask your teacher for that link. If you cannot access this online and prefer a paper form please ask your teacher. These are also available in Spanish.

Forms must be signed and completed a week prior to your trip departure at the latest. There is a due date associated with your grade for classes, please ask your teacher or see the syllabus for those specific dates for each class.

Please keep this registration packet to refer to for packing and any questions you have before or during your course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Cottonwood Institute collaborates with schools and youth organizations to provide overnight camping trips. These trips focus on learning in the outdoors and range in subject depending on the season and trip. Some highlights include: low impact camping skills, playing games, snowshoeing in the winter months, backpacking skills, cooking on camp stoves, teamwork and group dynamics, nature awareness, leadership, basic ecology, learning about survival skills and having a good time outdoors!

Food will be provided on all trips, along with sleeping bags, pads and tents on most of our trips. Please refer to the list below for packing and equipment. Cottonwood Institute has gear to borrow or rent by reserving in advance.

NUTS AND BOLTS:

- Each trip is different in terms of where we are headed and for how long, what day we leave and return. Please see specific course information for these dates, locations, and times.
- Most trips have a pre-course meeting at the school in the weeks before the trip departs. This will be announced by your teacher.
- Trips typically meet at the school at 8 a.m. on the morning of departure.
- Trips return by approximately 4 p.m. on the last day.
- All CI courses will camp within 2 hours of Denver in the Front Range Mountains. Locations change based on weather and land availability and can be discussed at the pre-course meeting.

EXAMPLE COURSE ITINERARY:

Winter Field Day:

- Eat breakfast on your own and meet at the course start location.
- We will check through your gear to make sure you have everything on the equipment list, to make sure you are prepared.
- Load up van and travel to our course location outside of Nederland, CO.
- We will hike into a good spot for playing and learning with plenty of snow and spend the day understanding snow and how to survive and thrive in it and with it and learning how to be comfortable in the winter outdoors.
- We will pack up hike out and head home in the afternoon returning around 4 pm.

Overnight:

Day 1 –

- Eat breakfast on your own and meet at the course start location
- We will check through your gear to make sure you have everything on the equipment list and are prepared.
- Load up the van and travel to our course location.
- Set up camp, get to know each other, learn how to minimize our impact on our new environment, and begin to practice essential low impact camping skills.
- Play games, learn several methods of building a fire (if fire bans are not in effect).
- In the evening, we will participate in evening nature awareness activities and we will hang out discussing our time together and what we learned.

Day 2 -

- We will spend our second day together starting with breakfast and warm up activities.
- Participants will set the intention to bring the skills and knowledge of being environmental stewards to their community. Students will also learn how to reduce their environmental footprint in the backcountry and how to apply this to their daily lives.
- Pack up our gear, final clean up, and depart no later than 2:30 p.m.
- Meet back at course finish location at approximately 4:00pm for final course dismissal.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION:

If there is an emergency situation at home and you need to be contacted while we are in the field, please have your loved ones call Ford Church, Executive Director, or Madeline Bachner, Program Director, at 303.447.1076. We may not have day-to-day communication with Instructors in the field, no news is good news while we are in the field! Your Instructors are trained in wilderness medicine and are prepared to handle backcountry emergencies. If there is an emergency while we are at our basecamp, your instructors will make sure the scene is safe, will stabilize the patient, and will call Emergency Medical Professionals to secure medical treatment and coordinate an evacuation if necessary. In the event of an emergency the Cottonwood Institute will call the emergency contacts listed on your course paperwork (filled out online).

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

- Cottonwood Institute – 303.447.1076
- Ford Church, Cottonwood Institute Executive Director – 303.447.1076 x700
- Madeline Bachner, Cottonwood Institute Program Director- 303.447.1076 x701
- Taryn Longberry, Cottonwood Institute Program Coordinator – 303.447.1076 x702

EQUIPMENT LIST:

In order to participate in this course, you will need to purchase, rent, or borrow the following equipment. Having the proper gear will make for a much more comfortable experience, so please ask us if you have any questions. Please note that you are responsible for carrying your own personal equipment during our course, so pack light. If something is not on the equipment list, you probably do not need it during our course. Personal items you need before and after your course (like electronics) will be stored in our locked van, but will not be accessible once our course begins. Please do not buy expensive gear to come on this trip, use what you have and ask about borrowing from our extensive gear supply!

The Cottonwood Institute has limited gear available for borrowing. If you need advice about what clothing or equipment to get for this course or if you would like to reserve equipment, please email us at taryn@cottonwoodinstitute.org and we will be happy to assist you.

Please bring the following personal gear:

- 1 pair sturdy boots or shoes – depending on weather you may want a pair of warm winter boots.
 - 1 pair of slip on shoes for around camp
 - 2-3 wide-mouth 32-ounce water bottles
 - 2 pair of wool/smartwool socks.
 - 1 long underwear bottoms - No cotton.
 - 1 long underwear tops - No cotton.
 - 1 sturdy long pants – Carhartt pants, Army fatigues, or jeans will work.
 - 1 long sleeved cotton t-shirts - Long sleeve shirts are preferred for building shelters, and keeping off the sun but short sleeves will work.
 - 1 fleece, sweater, pull over, or light jacket for layering
 - 1 warm jacket such as down or synthetic fill coat.
 - Rain gear tops and bottoms – Avoid cheap plastic raingear that will tear or shred. Breathable fabrics like Gore-Tex are preferred, other lightweight, breathable, waterproof nylon fabrics will work.
 - 1 pair warm winter gloves.
 - 1 hat with brim – A baseball hat or sun hat will work fine.
 - 1 wool/fleece hat
 - 1 Bandana
 - A change of underwear for each day
 - Sunglasses
 - Eyeglasses if needed – We do not recommend bringing contacts due to hygiene and eye health.
 - Toothbrush & toothpaste
 - Sunscreen & Chapstick with sunscreen
 - Headlamp or flashlight and extra batteries.
 - Personal medications, feminine hygiene products - If applicable.
 - Journal and pen/pencil.
 - Camera - Optional. NO CELL PHONES, if this is your only camera, please purchase a disposable or feel free to use the shared CI camera and we will email pictures to the group.
-
- Tents, sleeping bags and sleeping pads are provided on most trips.

FOOD AND DIET:

You will be responsible for your own meals before and after your course (breakfast on Day One and Dinner on Day Two), but all meals will be covered during your course. If you have any special dietary restrictions or allergies that we need to know about during your course, please indicate this information on your Medical and Health History Form and we will make sure that we accommodate you to the best of our ability. While we can make certain dietary accommodations for people with legitimate medical concerns, we may not be able to cater to individual cravings and food preferences. We will put together a great menu during our course and you will have an opportunity to try your hand at mastering the art of backcountry cooking.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONING:

During this course, you should expect to be at altitudes between 7,000 feet and 10,000 feet. The better physical condition you are in when you arrive, the better experience you will have during your course. Staying hydrated before, during, and after your course is essential. Staying hydrated helps prevent altitude sickness and hypothermia and helps your body function like a well-oiled machine. If you notice a headache coming on, if you are feeling sluggish, tired, and have noticed you are in a bad mood, drink water because you are most likely dehydrated. You should be drinking at least 1 gallon (4 liters)/day and going to the bathroom every 1-2 hours; otherwise, you are not drinking enough water!

NO CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONICS

Cell phones, pagers, iPods, palm pilots, and other electronic devices (except cameras) are **prohibited during your course**. You may need these items to communicate with the outside world before and after your course, but they will not be allowed in the field. We will be in remote areas of Colorado and cell reception is unlikely. One of our objectives during this course is to tune into the natural world and enjoy the present moment, quiet, and solitude. We will temporarily leave our normal lives, our hectic schedule, drama, homework, meetings, appointments, phone calls, emails, faxes, and to-do lists and relax into the wilderness!

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY:

The use or possession of any type of illegal drugs, recreational drugs (including marijuana), alcohol, or tobacco by participants, volunteers, or parents/guardians, is strictly forbidden during Cottonwood Institute programs and activities. The Cottonwood Institute reserves the right to search the belongings and/or person of any participant or volunteer who is suspected of violating the Drug and Alcohol Policy during a course. Participants and/or volunteers in violation of the Drug and Alcohol Policy may be immediately removed from the course. The Cottonwood Institute is not responsible for costs associated with removing a participant and/or volunteer from the field while a course is in progress.

Please understand, this is a smoke-free course. If you are addicted to nicotine (cigarettes, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, etc.) please try to quit before your course starts or talk to your doctor about prescribing the patch. Smoking is also a safety concern in terms of potentially starting wildfires, so smoking is not allowed.

Cottonwood Institute must be informed about any prescription drugs participants/volunteers are taking; this information must be listed on the participant/volunteer's health form.

Cottonwood Institute instructors will hold all medications (including over-the-counter meds) for students and remind them when to take them. This helps ensure students get their medication on time, do not lose their meds, and do not share with other students. Exceptions will be made for birth control, personal inhalers and epi pens for allergies which should be carried by students at all times.

SAFETY CONCERNS:

Getting lost, dehydration, altitude sickness, hypothermia, lightning strikes, and wildlife encounters, although unlikely, are our biggest safety considerations during this course. In order to prevent injuries during our course, we will stay together and look out for ourselves and each other. Having the right equipment is essential for having a safe and enjoyable trip.

We do not allow weapons of any kind on CI courses. If you are bringing a knife for whittling and carving, please be sure the blade is no longer than 3.5 inches and preferably fixed blade. You must tell your instructors if you plan on carrying knife of any kind. It is also very important to drink lots of water even when you are not thirsty and to eat high calorie meals and snacks throughout the day. We will talk about how to prevent specific safety concerns when our course begins, so stay tuned for a more thorough safety briefing before we go into the field.