



## **Exploring Prince William Sound - Course Overview**

### **June 6-12, 2018**

Please read the entire information packet carefully. This information will help you plan and prepare for your course. If you have any further questions after you have read this packet, please contact William Melton at (907) 771-8466 or [wmelton@alaskageographic.org](mailto:wmelton@alaskageographic.org).

### **Short Synopsis**

The main purpose of the course is to inspire teachers to connect their students to nature. The human relationship to nature will be a central theme, with an emphasis on America's public lands and our idea of wilderness. Topics will include the area's Alaska Native history, early Euro-American activities, evolution of the Chugach National Forest, 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, and the local effects of global climate change. The group will also learn about the area's flora, fauna and glaciers. Participants will practice camping, kayaking, and other outdoor skills. Special thanks to Prince William Sound Regional Citizen's Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) and Chugach National Forest for generously supporting this course, which allows Alaska Geographic to offer the course at a low, subsidized fee for all participants.

### **Activities**

This Alaska Geographic course is active and field-based. Participants should be in good physical condition. Kayaking will be moderately strenuous, in two-person expedition-style boats, covering distances of approximately 5-12 miles per day and stretches of 2-3 hours at a time between breaks out of the boat. No previous kayaking experience necessary. Hiking mostly includes exploratory walks along very uneven beach terrain and creek beds as there is thick underbrush and no trails above high tide line. Seating for meals and lessons is on the ground. Participants will participate in loading and unloading kayaks as well as carrying boats and group gear short distances on uneven terrain.

### **Tentative Schedule**

Schedules may be modified according to weather and sea conditions and to fit the needs and interests of the participants and instructor, such as viewing unique wildlife sightings and/or spectacular scenery.

### **Wednesday 6/6/2018**

4:00-6:00 p.m. - Orientation meeting at Alaska Geographic (241 North C Street, Anchorage)

Evening - Participants are responsible for their own meals and lodging.

### **Thursday 6/7** (exact timing subject to change – to be confirmed at orientation meeting)

7:45 a.m. – Participants sharing van from Anchorage depart.

8:45 a.m. – Participants with personal transportation meet van and depart from Girdwood to hit

9:30 tunnel into Whittier. (Long term parking for the course is available at the USFS office in Girdwood.)

9:30 a.m. – Load water taxi and head to camp

**Thursday afternoon through Monday evening** – Schedule will “go with the flow” and clocks will only matter in regards to tracking the tides. Each day’s schedule will include three family-style meals plus plenty of snacks, group camp life and chores, approximately two 90-minute class sessions, an exploratory paddle and/or hike, depending on weather and other factors, and personal reflection time. The plan is for the group to remain at one camp throughout the course.

### **Tuesday 6/12**

Morning - Water taxi will pick up group at camp and return to Whittier.

Afternoon - Van will return participants to Girdwood and Anchorage.

### **Weather**

The entire course takes place outdoors and activities will continue rain or shine. Weather conditions are unpredictable in Prince William Sound and generally include precipitation. You must be prepared for a wide range of conditions. Temperatures can vary from near freezing to 80 degrees F. Mosquitoes and other biting insects can be numerous anytime during the summer. Be prepared with adequate warm clothing, a hooded rain jacket, and rain pants (rubberized fisherman style is highly recommended). Dress in layers. Please review carefully the Clothing & Equipment List provided.

### **Meeting Location, Parking, and Departure**

The Alaska Geographic office is in the Ship Creek area, 241 North C Street, Anchorage. For those who need to park cars during the program, you will have the option to meet the van on Thursday morning at the Forest Service office, 145 Forest Station Rd, Girdwood, AK.

All gear and supplies must be packed in small or medium dry bags (duffel-sized dry bags do not fit well into kayak hatches). One small (10L) and two medium (25L) dry bags will be provided at the orientation meeting to each person if needed; this should be sufficient for packing all personal clothing and gear, including sleeping bag. Please have dry bags packed and ready to load on Thursday morning.

The water taxi ride will be approximately an hour from Whittier to camp and can be choppy, so plan accordingly.

### **Camping Accommodations**

Camping in Prince William Sound is primitive wilderness camping. There will be no amenities, including no outhouse. Backcountry toilet protocols will be taught and all materials provided. Camping will be in tents for two people in order to fit the group in small camping areas; please plan to share a tent with a course participant of the same gender. Participants are welcome to bring their own backpacking-style tent, sleeping bag, and sleeping pad, or Alaska Geographic has gear to borrow for a minimal maintenance fee. Please review carefully the Clothing & Equipment List provided.

### **Meals**

Meals will be prepared family-style in camp. Plentiful snacks will be available. **Please notify us several weeks before the course of any specific dietary needs or restrictions.**

### **Payment**

Payment deadline is January 31st. Checks are preferred, but credit cards are also accepted. Please send check to:

Alaska Geographic

241 North C. Street Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Or call our front desk at 907-274-8440 to pay by credit card.

### **Cancellation Policy**

Cancellations that occur 60 days in advance of the course start date will be refunded the course fee, less a processing fee of \$35 per space. For cancellations and/or substitutions within 60 days of the start date, the entire fee will be retained unless we can fill your space. Registration fees are not transferable to future years. If we have to cancel a course, your entire fee will be refunded. Refunds will be credited to the credit card used during the original transaction if less than 100 days since the original transaction. All other refunds will be made through a mailed check. Please contact our staff to process a refund. All membership purchases are nonrefundable and non-transferable.

### **Insurance and Liability**

Participants should have their own health and accident insurance. Also please consider travel insurance in case you have to cancel your trip due to illness or injury. All participants will be asked to read and sign Alaska Geographic's risk form and complete the emergency contact and medical form. Please bring these forms with you to the check-in on the first day of the course. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Important Phone Numbers**

General Course Information: 907-771-8466

Emergency Contact: Program Director 907-771-8482: During the course participants will not have access to a phone or cell phone coverage.

### **Professional Development Credit**

Three professional development credits are awarded for completion of this course, including post-field assignments. By enrolling in this course, you are officially pre-registered and pre-paid with the University of Alaska – Anchorage. A registration form will be made available prior to the start of the course on the Alaska Geographic website. Please fill it out and bring it with you to the course check-in.

### **Suggested Course Reading List**

- The Spill, Personal Stories from the Exxon Valdez Disaster by Sharon Bushell and Stan Jones (2009)
- Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv (2008)
- A History of Prince William Sound Alaska by Jim and Nancy Lethcoe (2001)
- Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast by Pojar, J and A. MacKinnon (1994)
- Sea Kayaking Skills, Skills & Ethics Series, Leave No Trace Inc. (2002)
- Wilderness and the American Mind by Roderick Nash (2001)
- Driven Wild by Paul Sutter (2002)
- The Idea of Wilderness by Max Oesschlaeger (1991)
- The Enduring Wilderness by Doug Scott (2004)
- From Conquest to Conservation by Dombeck, Wood, Williams (2003)
- A Sand County Almanac by Aldo Leopold (1949)
- Travels in Alaska by John Muir
- A Wilderness Original, the Life of Bob Marshall by James M. Glover (1986)
- Wilderness Forever: Howard Zahniser and the Path to the Wilderness Act by Mark Harvey (2006)
- The Future of the Wild: Radical Conservation for a Crowded World by Jonathan Adams (2007)