



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

FLY FISHING THE WILD BACKPACKING TRIP

Itinerary & Details

FIELD SEMINAR - SUMMER 2023

INSTRUCTOR: Jesse Logan, Ph.D. & Steve Harvey

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY: Jesse Logan has spent all his life in the Rocky Mountain West, and has been an avid fly fisherman for most of that time. He holds certificates from the National Association of Interpretation, Leave No Trace, and the Yellowstone Association. He brings these skills and a lifetime of experience backpacking and fly fishing backcountry water to this field seminar. He is co-Editor and Contributing Map editor for the award winning (Big Sky Award, High Plains Book Award finalist, and Independent Publishers Gold Medal) book *Voices of Yellowstone's Capstone: A Narrative Atlas of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness*.

Steve Harvey built his first fly rod at the age of 12, and has spent a lifetime chasing trout and a variety of other fish all over the world. Now, with his true passion clear, he now lives 3 miles from the Park boundary and 25 minutes from the Lamar River. Certified as a casting instructor in 2001, and continuing that education through the Wulff Casting Instructor School in 2015, Steve has taught fly fishing for the Yellowstone Institute since 2015. As an experienced mountaineer, SAR volunteer, climber, skier and hiker, Steve's passions revolve around his outdoor experience and familiarity with Yellowstone and the surrounding mountains.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: This course is an activity **level 5+** and students enrolled in this course are expected to be active participants. Be prepared for brisk aerobic, destination-oriented hiking up to 12 miles a day. You should be physically conditioned to do these hikes comfortably. Elevation changes up to 2000 feet on dirt trails or off-trail. Loose rock, uneven footing, steep hillside traverses, and stream crossings are possible. Good coordination is required.*

- Average pack weight: 40 – 50 lbs
- Elevation range: 6,000 – 10,000 feet
- Terrain: Hiking mainly on trail with opportunities for peak ascents and fishing spots

*All field activities will be conducted as a group. If you cannot meet the activity level expectations during your program, you may be restricted from participation in daily outings. We will not alter program itineraries or activities to accommodate participants who cannot meet the expectations of the stated activity level.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: **In order to participate in this backpacking course, each student must be able to safely carry out the following:**

- Transport clothing, food, and equipment weighing up to 40 pounds at a reasonable pace across uneven terrain, at high elevations, on routes with distances, elevation gains and elevation losses as outlined in the route description
- Set up camping equipment and move about the campsite
- Cross streams and rivers that may be moving swiftly
- Be prepared for and endure extreme weather conditions
- Understand and follow instructors and safety commands.

LOCATION: Course begins at the Yellowstone Forever classrooms located in Gardiner, MT and a majority of the program is spent in the Yellowstone backcountry.

PROGRAM DATES & TIMES: The program begins at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 2, 2023, and ends on Saturday, September 9 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

LODGING CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT: No lodging is provided for this course, however, there may limited lodging available through Yellowstone Forever at the Yellowstone Field Overlook Campus, for the first few days of the course. For more information, please contact the Institute at institute@yellowstone.org. **Majority of the program will be spent at a variety of different Yellowstone backcountry campsites.**

MEALS: You will need to provide and pack all your own food.

For general information about the facilities, preparing for classes, what to expect, cancellation policies, and more, please see the [Gardiner Field Seminars - Summer General Information](#) document.

FROM THE INSTRUCTOR

Starting as melted snow in the 10,000-foot peaks of the Absaroka mountains, cold, pure waters flow northward making up a multitude of rivulets, creeks, and streams that combine south of Yellowstone Lake as the true headwaters of the Yellowstone River. From there, deep in the most remote places in the lower forty-eight, the Yellowstone begins its long, 692-mile trek to the Missouri - the longest undammed waterway in the US outside of Alaska.

Share with us in the exploration of this remote and magnificent landscape; fishing as we hike and camp. Six days, starting with a scenic and educational boat trip across Lake Yellowstone to a remote trailhead, we will hike to remote campsites within easy walking distance to the fishery. Exhaust yourself in pursuit of wild trout by day and return to camp to enjoy the sunset and stars that surround this remote piece of Yellowstone. Learn not only advanced fly-fishing skills but also the history, flora and fauna of this unique and special place.

As the largest freshwater lake above 7,000 ft in North America, Yellowstone Lake is truly a magnificent jewel of the Rocky Mountains. With an amazing 110 miles of shoreline and an average depth of 139 feet, cold and pure, these waters are the birthright to the Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout - the iconic fish of dreams for anglers around the world.

In 1994, the first recorded Lake Trout was caught by an angler in Yellowstone Lake. Consuming up to sixty cutthroat trout in a year, these voracious predators have been a tremendous threat to native fish. But through aggressive management, cutthroat populations have begun to recover. Learn more from our team about recovery efforts and their impact on the other native residents – grizzlies, otters, eagles, and ospreys and how they all connect.

You'll need to be fit to make the most of your trip. At over 7,000 ft, the air is thin so good fitness will allow you to truly enjoy the experience. With one planned hiking day of 11 miles and another of 13 miles, packing light will be our mantra. As a metric, our packs will be less than 25 pounds; we understand the utility of traveling light. For the fit and most adventurous, side trips to local peaks or high points will offer a once-in-a-lifetime perspective on Yellowstone.

As the date approaches, we will e-mail students with additional information regarding our trip. Please feel free to contact your instructors with questions or concerns.

Our destination is like no other; you will be a rare visitor connecting in a unique way to Yellowstone.

- Jesse & Steve

***All participants will be expected to supply their own backpacking equipment and food. Lodging at the Yellowstone Overlook may be available for the first and last night of this course.**

PROGRAM ITINERARY

The itinerary is designed to take advantage of the best opportunities in the park, but may be adjusted to adapt to weather conditions, wildlife activity, holidays, and road construction.

The details and timing of the agenda are subject to change.

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| Day 1 | Evening Orientation
Welcome and introductions
Background information |
| Day 2 | Depart Gardiner <u>6AM sharp</u> for Bridge Bay Marina. Boat shuttle from Bridge Bay to backcountry trailhead. Hike approximately 11 miles to base-camp site 1. |
| Day 3 | Spend full day fly-fishing and exploring the landscape around base-camp 1. |
| Day 4 | Fly-fish from Base-camp 1 in the morning. Pack and short hike (2.7 mi) to base-camp site 2. Explore and fish near base-camp 2 in the afternoon/evening. |
| Day 5 | Spend full day fly-fishing and exploring the landscape around base-camp 2. Optional hike exploring the Colter Peak massif. |
| Day 6 | Pack and hike (13.2 miles) to dropoff/pick-up point. |
| Day 7 | Boat shuttle to Bay Bridge and transport to Gardiner, expected time of arrival in Gardiner, 2PM. |

PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

For a full list of recommended equipment for all courses see the [Gardiner Field Seminars - Summer General Information](#) document.

Required:

- ☐ Notebook and pencil for observations
- ☐ Yellowstone NP fishing license and *Yellowstone Fishing Regulations* booklet
- ☐ A packet of extra leaders
- ☐ A 5 wt. or 6wt. fly rod and reel
- ☐ Tippet (4, 5 & 6X), flotant, nippers, hemostat
- ☐ Optional, Ketchum Release or other quick-release tool
- ☐ Assorted flies – we will contact students with suggestions as time for our field seminar approaches
- ☐ Full list of personal backpacking gear will be supplied by Instructors as time for our seminar approaches

Recommended Backpacking Gear:

Upper Body Clothing

- ☐ Base layer (long underwear): Light-or mid-weight long-sleeve top, wool, or synthetic
- ☐ Middle layer (fleece jacket): Midweight pull-over or zip-up top, fleece, or wool
- ☐ Top layer (synthetic jacket): A warm, synthetic-fill “puffy” jacket that fits over your other layers and under your rain jacket. A hood is recommended.
- ☐ Rain jacket: Durable, waterproof, non-insulated jacket with hood. Coated nylon or breathable fabrics (e.g. Gore-Tex, H2No, etc.) are both acceptable. It is very important that your rain jacket fits well over all your base and mid-layers.
- ☐ Hiking shirt: A lightweight synthetic or wool t-shirt

Lower Body Clothing

- ☐ Base layer (long underwear): Mid-weight synthetic or wool bottoms. Cotton and cotton blends are not acceptable.
- ☐ Middle layer (fleece pants): Mid- or heavy-weight bottoms that fit comfortably over the base-layer bottoms. Fleece pants or insulated puffy pants are both acceptable.
- ☐ Wind pants/hiking pants: Nylon or synthetic pants. These should fit comfortably over lower-body base layers. Side zippers allow the pants to be put on over boots. Soft-shell fabrics are acceptable, but lightweight pants may not be durable enough.
- ☐ Underwear and sports bra (2-3 pairs): Briefs or boxers should be synthetic or nylon shorts with liners. Briefs may be cotton, synthetic, or silk. Sports bras should be synthetic or silk.
- ☐ Rain pants: A durable, roomy, waterproof pant that can fit over other lower body layers. A full-length zipper is convenient for changing layers without removing boots.

Head, Neck, and Hands

- ☐ Buffs
- ☐ Baseball cap or wide-brim sun hat: To protect ears and face from the sun. A nylon model will dry more quickly.
- ☐ Wool or fleece hat: Warm, thick hat for cold nights. Should cover your ears.
- ☐ Liner gloves: Lightweight, synthetic glove liner that adds warmth while still allowing for dexterity.

Footwear

- ☐ Boots: Durable hiking boots; waterproof. Must have good support in the heel and ankle and be sturdy enough to carry 50+ pounds of gear. Please break in new boots before your course in order to prevent blisters.
- ☐ Wool socks (4-5): Mid to heavyweight. A combination of both weights is recommended for hiking and sleeping.
- ☐ Camp shoes: Comfortable shoes to change into at camp. Must be closed-toe. Lightweight and quick-drying shoes work well.

Packs & Sacks

- ☐ Backpack: Packs should be volume 60 – 110 liters. If you do not have a pack, you may be able to rent from REI in Bozeman. Consider packing a backpack rain cover as well (large garbage bag or internal pack liner can work well).
- ☐ Small stuff sacks (2-3): Small nylon or mesh sacks for organizing gear in your pack.

Sleeping Gear

- ☐ Tent
- ☐ Shelter/Rain cover
- ☐ A synthetic-fill mummy bag with approximately 3 pounds of fill, rated to 20°F.
- ☐ Compression sack: Stuff sack that packs sleeping bag or clothing layers into a smaller size than a regular stuff sack.
- ☐ Sleeping pad: Used for padding and insulation between sleeping bag and ground. Foam pads must be closed-cell and at least 3/8 inch thick. Inflatable pads are typically warmer but tend to get holes.

Cooking, Eating, and Drinking

- ☐ Hydration system: Total capacity of water systems should be at least 2L.
- ☐ Water treatment and/or water filtration device
- ☐ Stove/cooking system
- ☐ Bowl: Durable and able to handle hot liquids. Bowls with lids are useful
- ☐ Spoon: Light and durable. Should fit inside bowl preferably.
- ☐ Lighter
- ☐ Insulated mug or thermos
- ☐ Pot/pan
- ☐ Food storage bag

Waste Disposal

- ☐ Trowel (Yellowstone Forever will supply trowels)
- ☐ Toilet paper
- ☐ Gallon-size zip-lock bag for trash
- ☐ Opaque bag (to hold and hide waste paper)

Misc.

- ☐ Headlamp
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Bandana
- ☐ Toiletries: Toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, brush, skin lotion.
- ☐ Watch: Durable and waterproof, with an alarm feature.
- ☐ Prescription glasses and contact lenses (2-3 pairs)
- ☐ Pocket knife
- ☐ Medications
- ☐ Bear hang rope & carabiner or other attachment device (Yellowstone Forever will supply)

***During orientation, the group will identify group gear to reduce redundancies, and instructors will encourage all participants to review gear list and repack.**

Optional:

- ☐ Magnifying glass or hand lens
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Lightweight Binoculars
- ☐ Book or e-reader
- ☐ Camp chair
- ☐ Trekking poles (Yellowstone Forever will also supply trekking poles for those who do not have their own)
- ☐ Gaiters: Nylon boot attachment that protects the ankle from snow and dirt. Must be durable and large enough to fit over boots. (Optional)

Please don't bring:

- ☐ Stereos or radios
- ☐ Perfumes, deodorants, or other scented items
- ☐ Large knives or hatchets

WEATHER & OTHER CHALLENGES**Weather**

Much of the program time will be spent outdoors, and participants should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Summer temperatures can range from below freezing in the mornings to 85° Fahrenheit in the afternoons. Afternoon rain showers and thunderstorms are not uncommon and can be intense. Courses may experience snow and rain or long stretches of sun and blue skies.

Remoteness

You'll be miles from the amenities of civilization. Telephones, ambulances, and hospitals may be days away.

Wildlife

This course travels through an area home to a wide variety of wildlife including, but not limited to, bears, wolves, mountain lions, moose, bison, elk, etc. The program instructors will discuss wildlife safety and prevention tactics for avoiding wildlife encounters such as bear avoidance practices. All instructors and program assistants on the course will carry bear spray.

Emergency Services

- Each backpacking course is accompanied by at least one educator with current Wilderness First Responder certification and who is trained in Yellowstone Forever Institute safety protocols and emergency procedures.
- For backcountry emergencies requiring advanced medical care, National Park Service (NPS) emergency medical technicians are on-call at locations throughout the park. Institute Field Educators carry a signaling device and portable radios that can be used to call NPS to the scene of an emergency. Keep in mind, emergency help can take a long time to arrive at a remote location.
- Once a patient has been transported out of the backcountry, ambulance service to physician-staffed clinics throughout Yellowstone at Mammoth Hot Springs, Lake, and Old Faithful, in addition to hospitals in surrounding towns, is available.

RECOMMENDED READING

No prior reading is required, but participants might enjoy the following publications, that complement the program. Most publications are available at Yellowstone Forever's online store at shop.yellowstone.org Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15% discount and proceeds directly support the park.

- Nate Schweber. 2012. *Fly Fishing Yellowstone National Park: An Insiders Guide to the 50 Best Places*. Headwaters Books.
- J. D. Varley and P. Schullery. 1998. *Yellowstone Fishes: Ecology, History, and Angling in The Park*. Stackpole Books.
- R. Parks. 1998. *Fishing Yellowstone National Park*. Falcon Press
- Steve Harvey. *Casting the Fly*; castingthefly@gmail.com

WHOM TO CONTACT

For any questions, concerns, or additional information please contact the following:

- Program itinerary, health forms, payment, and activity questions please contact Yellowstone Forever at institute@yellowstone.org or 406-848-2400
- Road updates, park conditions, and general park information please contact Yellowstone National Park Service at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/contacts.htm>
- If running late for a program, please contact 406-848-2400