

# Wilderness Medicine Institute

## AN INSTITUTE OF THE NATIONAL OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

In consideration of the services of The Wilderness Medicine Institute of The National Outdoor Leadership School ("WMI"), I, joined by my parents or guardian if I am under eighteen years of age, agree and acknowledge as follows:

### ACTIVITIES AND RISKS

Although WMI has taken reasonable steps to provide me with appropriate equipment and skilled staff for the course for which I have registered, I acknowledge that the activities of the course have risks, including certain risks, which cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the activities. The same elements that contribute to the unique character of these activities can cause loss or damage to my equipment, accidental injury, illness, or in extreme cases, permanent trauma, disability or death. I understand that WMI does not want to frighten me or reduce my enthusiasm, but considers it important for me to know in advance what to expect and to be informed of the activities' inherent risks. The following describes some, but not all, of those risks.

- WMI courses may occur in remote places, many days from medical facilities. Communication and transportation are difficult and sometimes evacuations and medical care may be significantly delayed.
- Equipment may fail or malfunction, despite reasonable maintenance and use.
- Travel is by vehicle, snowshoe, snowmobile, skis, foot and other means, over rugged unpredictable off-trail terrain and improved and unimproved roads, including boulder fields, downed timber, rivers, rapids, river crossings, high mountain passes, snow and ice, steep slopes, slippery rocks, ocean tides and currents, waves and surf. Attendant risks include collision, falling, drowning and others usually associated with such travel, including environmental risks.
- Environmental risks and hazards include rapidly moving, deep or cold water; insects, snakes, and predators, including large animals; falling and rolling rock; lightning, avalanches, flash floods, falling timber, and unpredictable forces of nature, including weather which may change to extreme conditions without notice. Possible injuries and illnesses include hypothermia, frostbite, non-freezing cold injury, high altitude illnesses, sunburn, heatstroke, dehydration, and other mild or serious conditions.
- WMI activities are conducted indoors and outdoors, day and night. Physical activities include running, sustained climbing, hiking and repetitive lifting. They also include realistic simulated medical injury and treatment situations.
- WMI activities may involve travel to locations away from the primary classroom. Travel is not supervised by WMI and includes the use of personal vehicles and/or carpooling in vehicles not owned or controlled in any way by WMI. WMI has no responsibility for any incident arising out of such travel.
- Decisions are made by the instructors and students usually in a wilderness setting, based on a variety of perceptions and evaluations which by their nature are imprecise and subject to reasonable errors in judgment. Misjudgments may pertain to, among other things, a student's capabilities, environment, terrain, water and weather conditions, natural hazards, routes and medical conditions.
- WMI participants, including minors, will have unsupervised free time before, during and after their course. Free time activities are not part of the WMI program and are at the sole risk of the participants. WMI has no responsibility for such activities. WMI staff may from time to time provide assistance or even accompany participants in these free time activities, but in doing so, they are acting as private individuals, and not for WMI, and WMI is not responsible for their conduct.
- WMI programs in foreign countries may be exposed to laws, legal systems, customs and behaviors, animals, diseases and infections not common to the United States; in addition, these courses may be subject to dangerous road travel, political unrest, riots, demonstrations, banditry, terrorism, and other criminal conduct, including drug related activities.

I acknowledge that engaging in this program may require a degree of skill and knowledge not required in other activities, and that I have responsibilities as a student for managing risks to which I and others may be exposed. I acknowledge that WMI activities are instructional in nature and I expect to be challenged to expand my skills and judgment. I acknowledge that the staff of WMI has been available to more fully explain to me the nature and physical demands of this activity and the inherent risks, hazards, and dangers associated with this activity.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF INHERENT AND OTHER RISKS

I understand that the description above of the risks is not complete and that other unknown or unanticipated risks, inherent or otherwise, may result in property loss, injury, illness or death. I expressly acknowledge and assume the inherent risks identified herein and those inherent risks not specifically identified. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, no one is forcing me to participate, and I elect to participate in spite of and with knowledge of the inherent risks.

I represent that I am fully capable of participating in the program, without causing harm to others or myself. Therefore I assume and accept full responsibility for me and for injury, death and loss of personal property and expenses suffered by me and them as a result of those inherent risks and dangers identified herein and those inherent risks and dangers not specifically identified, and as a result of my negligence or otherwise wrongful conduct in participating in these activities.

In further consideration of the services of WMI I (joined by my parents or guardian if I am under eighteen years of age,) acknowledge that I have read and understand the Activities and Risks, above, and confirm its representations and agree to all its provisions as though they were fully set forth again here. In addition, except with respect to an injury or loss that occurs on public lands whose rules and regulations prohibit doing so, I acknowledge and expressly assume **all other** risks of the course and any other activity of WMI, whether those risks are known, unknown, inherent or otherwise.

