

RITE OF PASSAGE EXPEDITION



WIND RIVER RANGE, WYOMING
JULY 19-26, 2026

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1 EXPEDITION OVERVIEW

The *Rite of Passage Expedition* is an immersive wilderness experience designed to stretch the mind, elevate the spirit, strengthen the heart, challenge the body, and rest the soul. Participants should anticipate the physical challenges of backcountry travel with a group of up to a dozen individuals into a remote wilderness setting where leadership skills will be taught, demonstrated, and applied through outdoor skills and experiences.

During our time together you will not only strengthen your outdoor skills and nature-knowledge, but you will also be challenged to go deeper with God, yourself, and others. Plus, you will have a special bonding experience with your son(s) that will last a lifetime. Be prepared to be stretched in every way... but we'll have fun doing it!

Our basic schedule for the expedition is as follows:

- Sun, July 19 Travel Day
- Mon, July 20 Hike from trailhead to Big Sandy Lake
- Tue, July 21 Day hike to Cirque of the Towers
- Wed, July 22 Hike to Clear Lake
- Thu, July 23 Climb Haystack Mountain
- Fri, July 24 Climb East Temple Peak
- Sat, July 25 Rest and Renewal
- Sun, July 26 Exit Wilderness & Ceremony
- Mon, July 27 Travel Day

While every day will be filled with activity there will be plenty of time to decompress from the busy lives we left behind. Every evening, we will debrief the day and take some time to share perspectives about the deeper things of life. This will be one of the most important aspects of this journey into the wilderness, so we encourage you engage whole heartedly. Remember, what's said in the woods, stays in the woods!

This information packet is designed to help inform you and prepare you for the best that experience possible. Please read it carefully and reach out if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. We are here to serve you!

Here's to Living the Adventure,

Marty Miller and Jeremiah Curda
The Advent Wilderness Expedition Leadership Team

2 LEADERSHIP TEAM



Marty Miller, M.S. Ed

Marty is a veteran educator, outdoor professional, and leader of men. Marty is the founder and president of Blueprint for Men, a non-profit men’s ministry. Marty is gifted at discovering and sharing spiritual lessons from nature and is certified as a Wilderness First Aider, Leave No Trace Master Educator, ACA Swift Water Rescuer, and in AIARE Avalanche Rescue. Marty and his wife Gale have two adult children and six grandchildren. Life is good!



Jeremiah Curda, CCP/FPC

Jeremiah is an avid outdoorsman whose resume includes everything from rock climbing to skydiving instructor. With a background of over 15 years of 911 EMS experience including, ground transport, critical care transport and flight paramedic he brings a high level of expertise and skills to our outdoor leadership team. Jeremiah is passionate about sharing his love for God through community outreach, homeless ministry, and outdoor adventure. His high energy and skills are indispensable to the success of our expedition!

3. GROUP ROSTER

Name	Email	Phone	Home	Notes
1. Marty Miller	martydeanmiller@gmail.com	423-322-8491	Collegedale, TN	
2. Jeremiah Curda	jeremiahcurda@gmail.com	817-298-1520	Apison, TN	
3.				
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4. ITINERARY

Date	Tentative Itinerary
Sun, July 19	<p style="text-align: center;">Travel to Rock Springs</p> <hr/> <p>11:00 am Pick up those flying to DEN 11:30 Drive north toward Fort Collins 12:30 pm Eat lunch and pick-up last-minute supplies at REI 1:30 Drive Hwy 287 and I-80 to Rock Springs (339 mi/5 hr) LINK 6:30 Group members rendezvous in Rock Springs 7:00 Out to eat for Supper and check-in at Hotel 8:30 Group Orientation, Gear Check, Final Pack-out</p>
Mon, July 20	<p style="text-align: center;">Hike to Basecamp #1 @ Big Sandy Lake (5.5 mi, 800' gain)</p> <hr/> <p>6:00 am Breakfast at Hotel 7:00 Morning Briefing 8:00 Depart and drive north on Hwy 191 and Big Sandy Rd to trailhead 10:30 Arrive at Big Sandy TH (9,080') and begin hiking 12:00 pm Lunch Break along Big Sandy River 4:00 Arrive at Big Sandy Lake (9,690') and set-up camp 6:00 Supper 7:30 Evening Debriefing</p>
Tue, July 21	<p style="text-align: center;">Cirque of the Towers Day Hike (6.3 mi/2,200' gain)</p> <hr/> <p>7:30 am Breakfast 9:00 Morning Briefing 10:00 am Leave base camp and hike to Jackass Pass 12:00 pm Lunch on Jackass Pass 1:00 Descend to Lonesome Lake 3:00 Start back to base camp via Jackass Pass 5:00 Arrive back at Big Sandy Lake base camp 6:00 Supper 7:30 Evening Debriefing</p>
Wed, July 22	<p style="text-align: center;">Hike to Basecamp @ Clear Lake (1.5 mi/350' gain)</p> <hr/> <p>7:30 am Breakfast 8:30 Pack up Camp 9:30 Morning Briefing 10:30 Leave Big Sandy Lake</p>

	12:00	Arrive at Clear Lake and set-up camp (10,060')
	2:00	Outdoor Skills
	6:00	Supper
	7:30	Evening Debriefing
Thu, July 23	Climb Haystack Mountain or Fishing at Clear Lake	
	7:30 am	Breakfast
	8:30	Morning Briefing and Activity Options
	Option #1	Haystack Mountain Climb (Elevation 11,692') Overview: Jeremiah will lead a climb of either the Grassy Goat Scramble (4th class) or the North Gully (5.2) up to the top of Haystack Mountain. The climb is 2-3 miles round trip and gains about 1800' ft.
	Option #2	Fishing at Clear Lake Overview: Several of our group are seasoned fishermen and are willing to share their expertise with others of you in the group. If you are planning on fishing, make sure you have a Wyoming fishing license.
	6:00	Supper
	7:30	Evening Debriefing
Fri, July 24	Climb East Temple Peak or Hike Alpine Lakes	
	6:00 am	Breakfast
	7:00	Morning Briefing and Activity Options
	Option #1	East Temple Peak Climb (10,605') Overview: This is a strenuous hike (7 mi RT/3,100' gain) that climbs through increasing alpine terrain past Deep Lake (10,521) and Temple Lake, reaching a saddle between Temple and East Temple Peak. From there the trail disappears and becomes a rock scramble to the summit. Tremendous views and breathtaking drop off!
	Option #2	Alpine Lakes Loop Hike (4 mi RT/1,000' gain) Overview: This is a moderate hike that follows the route description above. But instead of heading to the summit from Temple Lake you descend along Rapid Creek and Miller Lake which eventually takes you back to basecamp.
	5:00	Bathing/Swimming
	6:00	Supper
	7:30	Evening Debriefing
Sat, July 25	Sabbath Rest and Relaxation	
	8:00 am	Breakfast
	9:00	Morning Briefing
	10:00	Solo Time for reading, reflecting, journaling, etc.
	6:00	Supper
	7:30	Evening Debriefing
Sun, July 26	Pack Out, Celebration, and Drive	
	6:00 am	Breakfast
	7:00	Pack-Up
	8:00	Morning Briefing
	9:00	Hike out to trailhead (6.7 mi/1,200' loss)
	12:00	Arrive at trailhead and start driving
	1:00 pm	Celebration Lunch at Big Sandy Lodge, WY - MENU
	3:00	Farewell
Mon, July 27	Travel Day	

5. GEAR LIST

General Backpacking & Camping Gear

- Packs
 - Large backpack (65L+)
 - Small daypack/fanny pack
- Sleeping
 - Sleeping bag (rated to a min. of 30° F)
 - Inflatable sleeping pad
- Shelter
 - Lightweight Tent
 - Hammock System
- Cooking
 - Stove w/fuel
 - Cook-set
 - Lighter/matches
 - Cooking Utensils
 - Bear canister for all food
- Hydration
 - Water bottles
 - Hydration bladder
 - Water filtration/treatment system
- Miscellaneous
 - Trekking Poles
 - Headlamp w/extra batteries
 - Zip-lock bags for stuff
 - Camp chair
 - Compass & map
 - Knife/Multitool
 - Paracord
 - Large trash bag

Clothing

- Footwear
 - Trail boots
 - Wool socks (3)
 - Camp shoes
- Outer Layer
 - Waterproof/breathable jacket
 - Waterproof/breathable pants
 - Warm gloves
 - Warm cap
 - Sun cap
- Mid Layer
 - Fleece insulating layer
 - Lightweight insulating jacket (puffy)
- Base Layer

- Quick-dry underwear (3)
- Quick-dry T-shirt (2)
- Sleep wear
 - Boxers & T-shirt

Personal First Aid Kit

- Band-Aids
- Duct tape
- Moleskin
- Ace bandage
- Athletic tape
- Scissors
- Antibiotic ointment
- Aspirin /Tylenol – for headaches
- Aleve/Ibuprofen – for swelling
- Prescriptions

Misc. Personal Items

- Protection:
 - Sunglasses
 - Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
 - Lip balm
 - Ear plugs for tent flap wind noise
 - Insect repellent (DEET)
- Hygiene
 - Toilet Bag – toilet paper, wipes, hand sanitizer, hand trowel
 - Toiletries – deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, shaving razor, biodegradable soap, wipes
 - Pack towel for bathing
- Recreation
 - Fishing gear
 - Wyoming fishing license
 - Binoculars
 - Camera
- Study
 - Small Bible
 - Journal
 - Pen/pencil
 - Reading book
- Electronics
 - Cell Phone
 - Battery block w/charging cable
- Travel
 - Clean clothes for trip back home
 - Cash for meals, snacks, etc.



6. LOGISTICS & MORE

Expedition Shared Expenses

This is not a “guided” trip so there is no fee for services. That being said, our group needs to help with shared expenses that include expedition leadership, group equipment, and rescue insurance. Shared expenses for the expedition come to \$300 per father. To make an online payment click [HERE](#). You can also send a check to Blueprint for Men, 5050 Layton Lane, Apison, TN 37302. Thank you!

General Information

- Marty’s Trip Pictures These pics from a 2020 trip show everything we will see! View [HERE](#)
- Mountain Weather Nearby Wind River Peak (13,193’) weather is similar. [mountainforecast.com](https://www.mountainforecast.com)
- Packing Tips <https://www.cleverhiker.com/tutorials/lightweight-backpacking-video-series/>
- Backcountry Beta <https://www.mountainproject.com/v/deep-lake-area/105827756>

Communication

Cell Phones - Much of the backcountry is out of cell phone range but you will be able to make a call from the summit of East Temple Peak on Friday.

Rocky Talkies - We will be carrying Rocky Talkie radios which we will operate on channel 23. We have 4 radios available for group use. Leaders will always carry radios. On Hiking/Climbing Days the procedure is to check in at designated times with anyone who stays at basecamp.

InReach - We will also be carrying an InReach satellite communication device that will allow for communicating and emergency activation.

- This device is owned by Marty Miller and therefore identified by his name in communications.
- The emergency contact listed on the InReach is Gale Miller, Marty’s wife.
- He will be contacting her every day via text to let her know how we are doing.
- Your wife or significant other can contact Gale at (423) 322-8491 if needed.

First Aid Supplies

We will be carrying a group first aid kit but please bring your own personal first aid kit as listed in the gear section.

Backcountry Medical Care

Jeremiah Curda is a veteran EMS professional and will be our “go-to” for medical emergencies. Several others in our group have medical skills and training which will allow us to provide backcountry care if needed.

Emergency

InReach – this satellite communication device allows us to send text messages and SOS to Search and Rescue in the event of emergency.

INREACH Emergency Activation: During an emergency, you can contact the GEOS International Emergency Rescue Coordination Center (IERCC) to request help. Pressing the SOS button sends a message to the rescue coordination center, and they notify the appropriate emergency responders of your situation. You can communicate with the rescue coordination center during your emergency while you wait for help to arrive.

NOTE: You should only use the SOS function in an actual emergency. In ideal conditions rescue may take only a few hours but in poor conditions it may be the next day before help arrives.

Rescue Insurance - In case of a major medical emergency that requires helicopter evacuation we provide rescue insurance up to \$50,000. It is essential that you provide next-of-kin contact information for emergency use.

Meals

Plan for 6 breakfasts, 6 trail lunches, and 6 dinners. All your food should be purchased, packaged in Zip-lock bags (1 qt bag per meal), and stored in a bear canister. If you do minimal cooking, you will probably only need a medium size propane canister. If you cook a lot, you probably will need a large size.

Comfort

It is recommended that everyone carry a lightweight camp chair to make sitting around camp more comfortable. If you want to bring a hammock that can also be a way to relax during down time.

Reflection, Journaling, Sketching, Photography, and Nature Study

During this expedition you will have ample time for reflection and solitude. Opportunities will abound for nature study and exploration. God speaks to us through the delicate flowers and the rugged mountains... but we must pause and listen!

Rock Climbing (Optional)

*4th Class Climbing is easy climbing with enough exposure to be dangerous or deadly if a fall is taken. People's comfort level is considered, and often fixed lines are set to provide safe passage for both ascent and descent.

*5th Class Climbing (5.1-5.15) is always approached with full rope protection provided by a belayer as a climber moves up placing and clipping into their own protection. Descent is often done by rappel or hiking down another route. In our case we will have the option of attempting at 5.2. A very easy climb with obvious hold for hands and feet at a moderate angle.



About the Wind River Range

The **Wind River Range** (or "Winds" for short), is a mountain range of the Rocky Mountains in western Wyoming in the United States. The range runs roughly NW-SE for approximately 100 miles (161 km). The Continental Divide follows the crest of the range and includes Gannett Peak, which at 13,804 feet (4,207 m), is the highest peak in Wyoming. There are more than 40 other named peaks more than 13,000 feet (3,962 m). Except for the Grand Teton in the Teton Range, the next 19 highest peaks in Wyoming after Gannett are also in the Winds. Two large National Forests including three wilderness areas encompass most of the mountain range. Shoshone National Forest is on the eastern side of the continental divide while Bridger-Teton National Forest is on the west. Both National Forests and the entire mountain range are an integral part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Portions of the range are also inside the Wind River Indian Reservation.

Bridger-Teton National Forest is located in western Wyoming, United States. The forest consists of 3.4 million acres (14,000 km²), making it the third largest National Forest outside Alaska. The forest stretches from Yellowstone National Park, along the eastern boundary of Grand Teton National Park and from there rides along the western slope of the Continental Divide to the southern end of the Wind River Range. The forest also extends southward encompassing the Salt River Range and Wyoming Range mountains near the Idaho border.

Big Sandy is the southernmost trailhead/campground in the Wind River Range, yet still boasts high-use because the trailhead provides access to areas such as the Cirque of the Towers and Pyramid Lake, as well as the Continental Divide Trail.

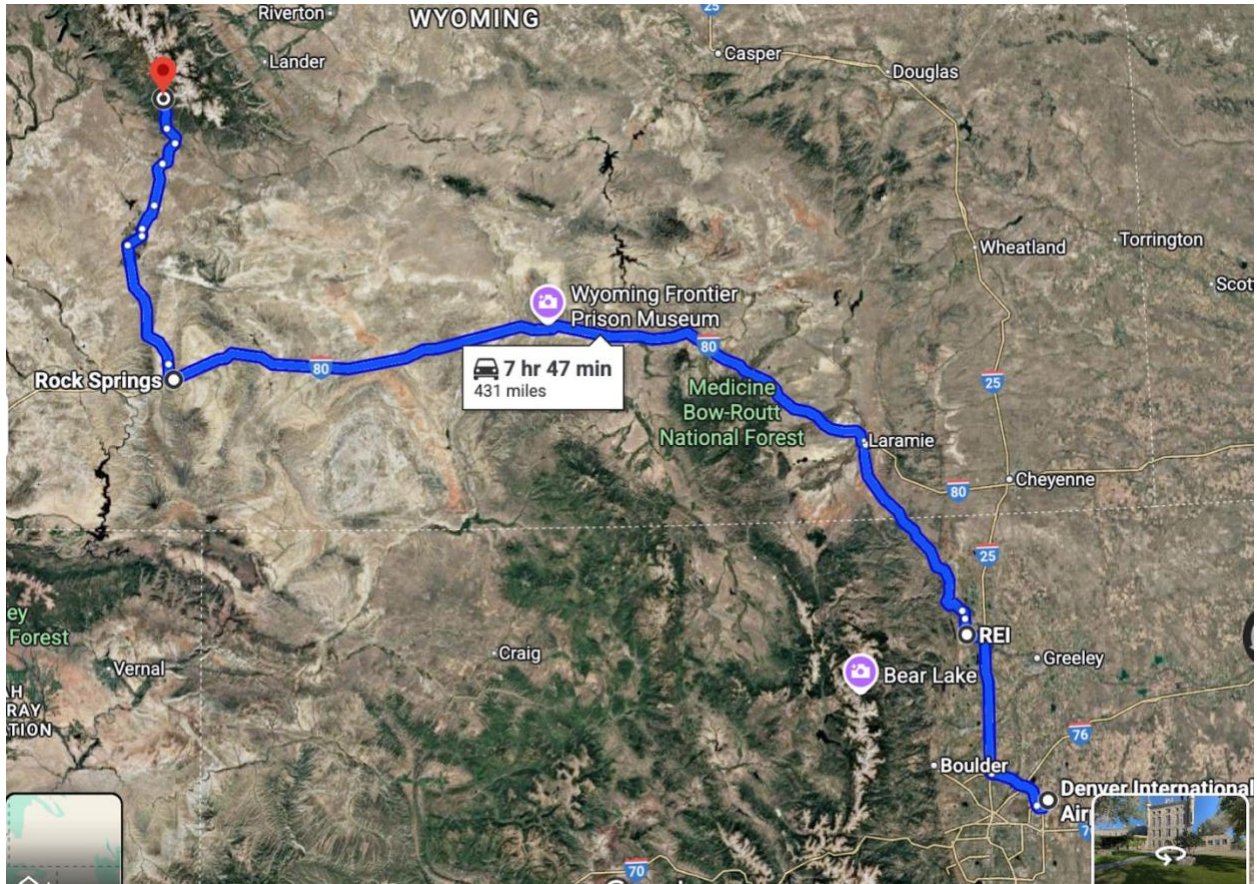
The 54-mile trip from Pinedale is partially paved but has about 27 miles of gravel and dirt. The last 10 miles of the road are very rough and narrow and are not recommended for RV travel, although not prohibitive.

The campground offers 12 sites surrounding the parking area for Big Sandy Trailhead. The campground and trailhead are at an elevation of 9,100 feet. Corrals are available. There is moderate parking at the trailhead with toilets and corrals. No drinking water available. Camping fee is \$8.00/night from June 20 to September 10.

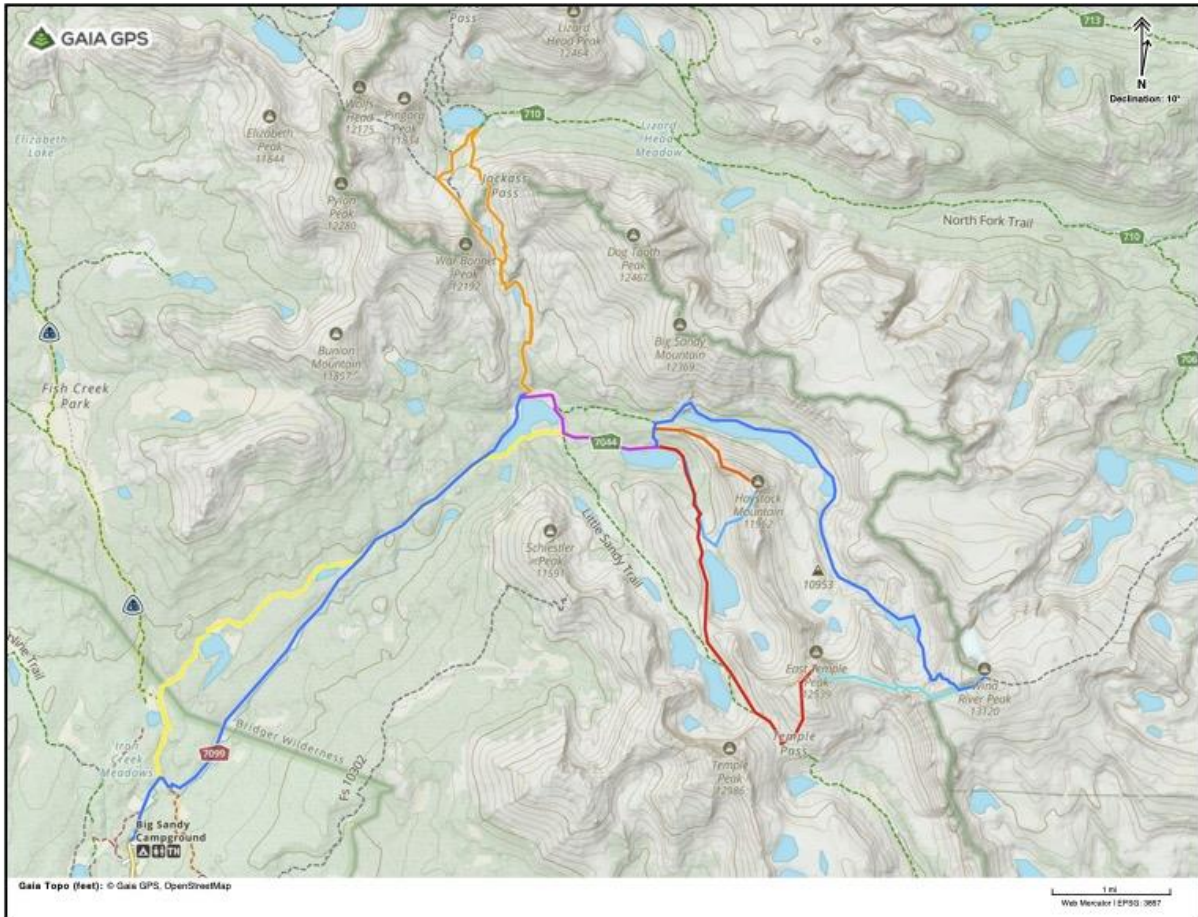
If coming from the north near Pinedale, Wyoming, drive 11 miles south on U.S. 191 to Boulder. From Boulder: Drive approximately 18.0 miles southeast on highway 353 on a paved road. Upon reaching a junction, shortly after the pavement ends, bear left (southeast) for 2.9 miles. At 2.9 miles bear right (still southeast). After approximately 6 miles, you will come to a signed intersection (A). Turn left (east), following the sign to Big Sandy. After 7.5 miles you will find another signed intersection (B) where you turn left (north) to Big Sandy. This winding road is steeper, and rockier but is still fairly good. Follow this road and signs for approximately 10.5 miles until reaching Big Sandy campground and trailhead (9080 ft).

If coming from the south near Rock Springs, Wyoming: Drive north on U.S. 191 to the town of Farson. Two miles east of Farson on highway 28, there is a sign to Big Sandy. Turn left (northeast) and drive approximately 40 miles of dirt road to intersection (A) as described above.

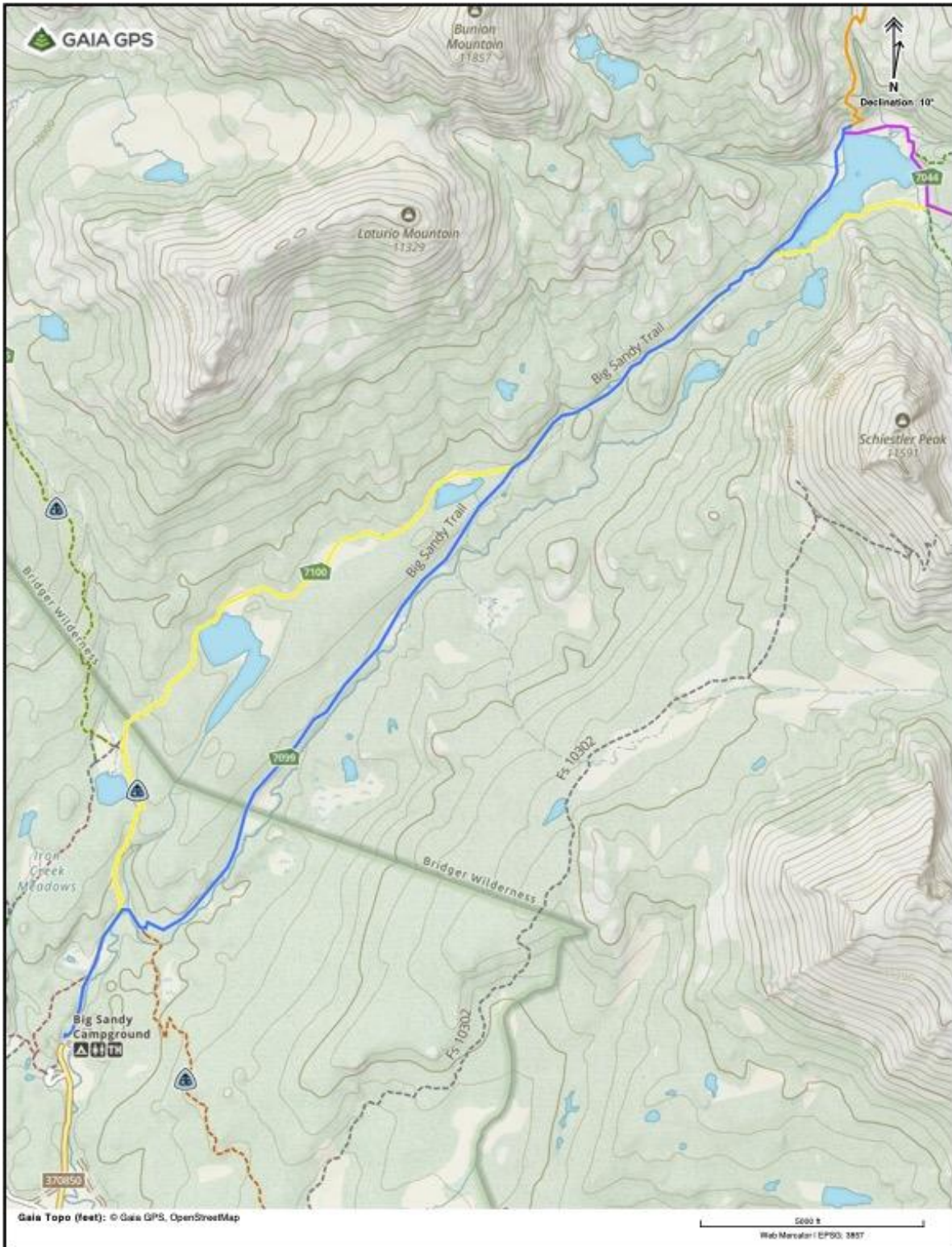
Driving Route from Denver to Big Sandy Trailhead



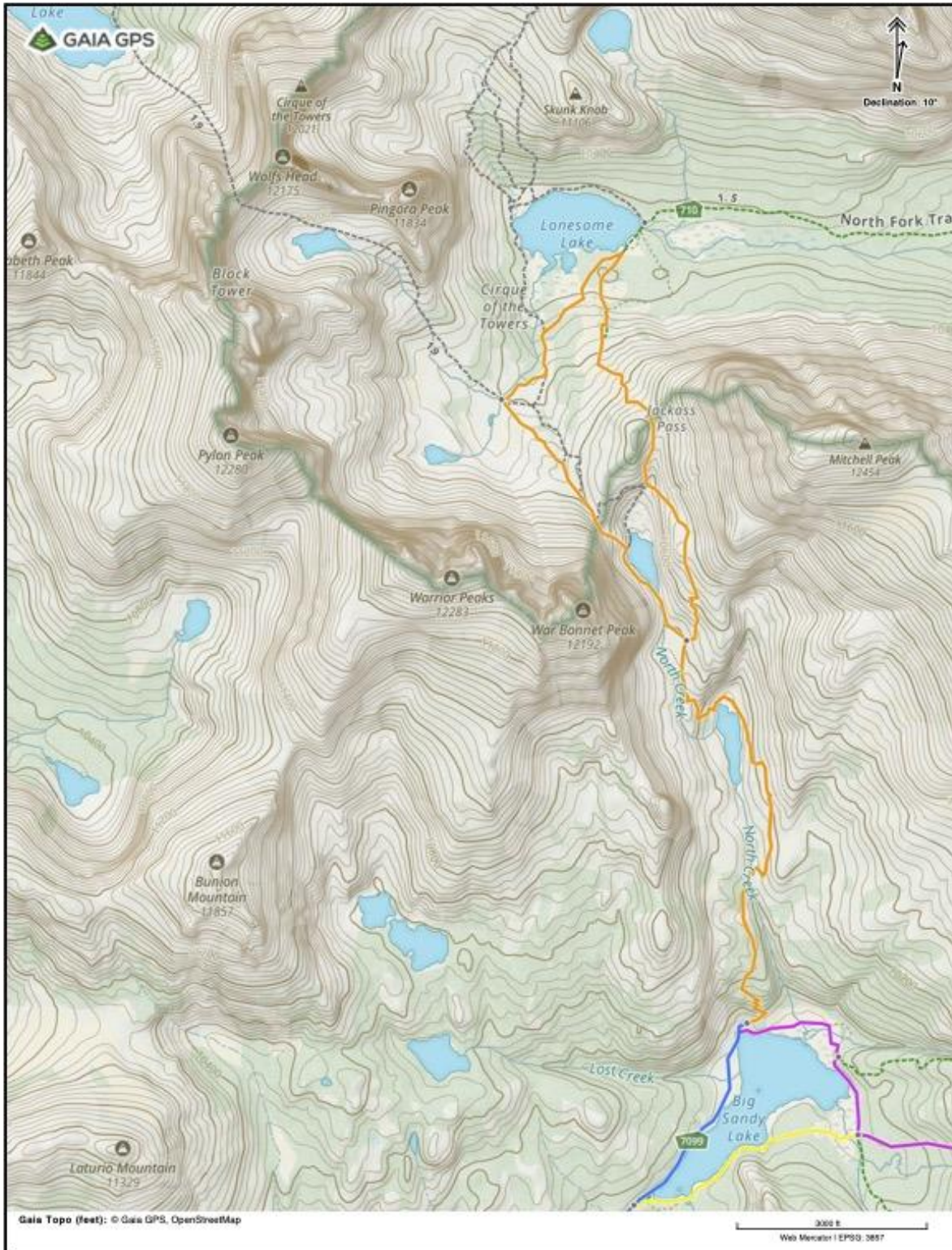
BIG SANDY AREA MAP



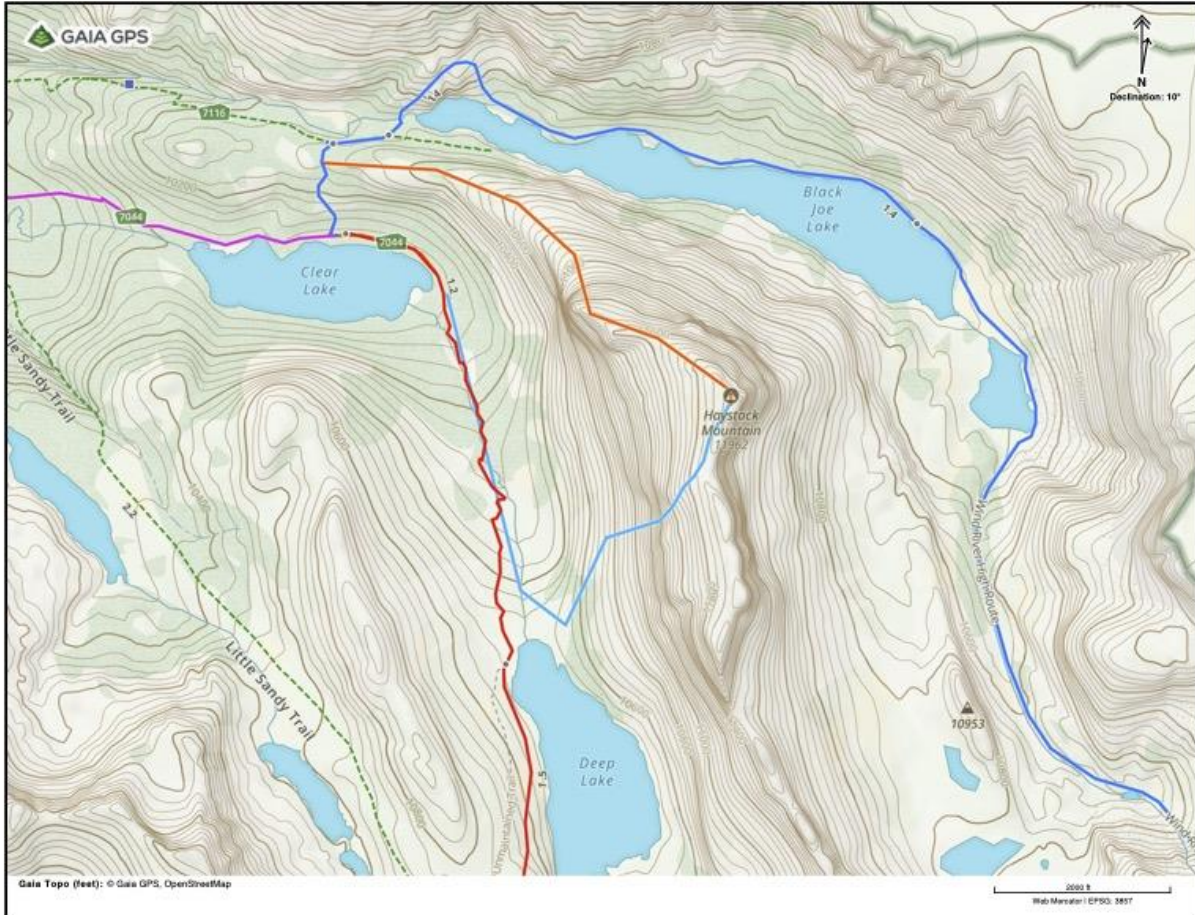
DAY 1 HIKE TO BIG SANDY LAKE



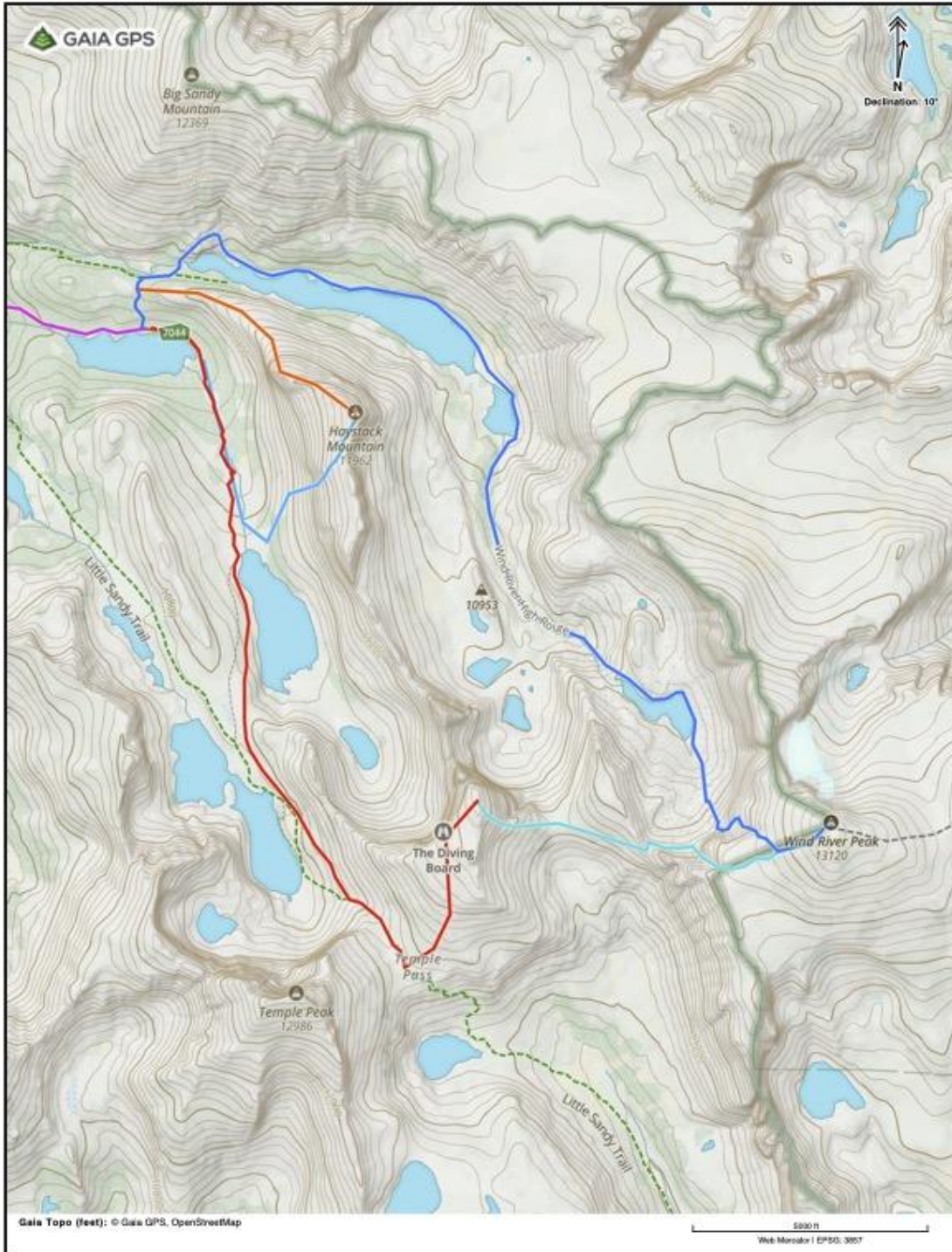
DAY 2 CIRQUE OF THE TOWERS



DAY 3,4 - CLEAR LAKE AND SURROUNDING AREA



DAY 5 - EAST TEMPLE PEAK OR ALPINE LAKES LOOP



7. LEAVE NO TRACE ETHICS



The Leave No Trace Seven Principles

The Leave No Trace Seven Principles are the bedrock of the Leave No Trace program. They provide guidance to enjoy our natural world in a sustainable way that avoids human-created impacts. The principles have been adapted to they can be applied in your backyard or your backcountry.

Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
 - In popular areas:
 - Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
 - Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
 - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
 - In pristine areas:
 - Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
 - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.
- Deposit solid human waste in cat holes dug 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cat hole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

Bear Awareness and Safety

- Bears have a broad diet and are attracted to a wide variety of unnatural foods, including human food, garbage, canned or bottled beverages, processed livestock feed, pet food, bird seed, toiletries, and coolers, stoves, and grills containing food or food residue.
- Bears that obtain human food or garbage often become aggressive and dangerous in their efforts to get more. This food-conditioned behavior can lead to human injury, death, and damage to property.
- Food-conditioned behavior usually cannot be changed, and these bears must be killed by managers.
- Don't be the one responsible for human injury or death or the death of a bear because YOU did not store your food properly.
- Read and understand food storage regulations before your visit. Coolers, backpacks, wooden boxes, and tents are not bear resistant and may not be used to store food or other bear attractants.
- Center for Wildlife Information [HERE](#)
- Bear Encounters - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHZ-prhA7E0>
- Bear Spray - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0wlc9ZecPKEFb0zERHo1agh6ZMqyDER>
- Bear Safety - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-zkGuh42l4>

Consent and Release Form

BLUEPRINT FOR MEN, INC

Participant Name: _____

Date of Activity: _____ to _____, 20 _____

Please read the Consent and Release Form Carefully

I am aware that during my participation in *Blueprint for Men* sponsored adventure activities, certain risks and dangers may occur. These include, but are not limited to: the hazards of being in a wilderness or natural area, on a physical fitness course (i.e. increased heart rate, sudden pulse rate increase, general heart risk [especially for those with past heart conditions], and death), the forces of nature, and other dangers inherent in being in or near a pool, lake, river and other recreational areas.

In consideration of my voluntary election to engage in activities sponsored by *Blueprint for Men*, I do hereby assume all risks and to the fullest extent permitted by law do hereby agree to defend and hold harmless *Blueprint for Men*, their representatives, officers, employees, agents, successors, or beneficiaries from and against any and all personal injury, causes of action, losses, cost, liability, actions, debts, claims, damages, expenses, and demands of every kind and nature whatsoever, including attorney fees and court costs, which I now have or which may arise from or in connection with my presence or participation in any activities arranged for me except for gross negligence or willful acts of *Blueprint for Men*, its employees, agents or contractors.

Further, I agree to indemnify *Blueprint for Men* for any causes of action, losses, cost, attorney fees, liability, actions, debts, claims, damages, expenses, and demands of every kind and nature whatsoever which I now have or which may arise from or in connection with my presence or participation in any activities arranged for me except for losses caused by gross negligence or willful acts of *Blueprint for Men*, its employees, agents or contractors.

This agreement shall be binding upon me, my heirs, executors and administrators. I have been informed of the risks of participating in any and all activities and my participation in these activities is completely voluntary and I assume all risks associated therewith.

By signing below, I agree to allow *Blueprint for Men* to use any pictures or video footage of this program for its promotional purposes.

SIGNED, this _____ day of _____, 20 _____

(Minors [anyone under the age of 18] must have their parent or guardian sign on their behalf.)

NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____
(Please print full name) (If minor, signature of parent or guardian)

Expedition Participant Profile

Personal Information

Name _____

Address _____

Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Emergency Contact _____

Name

Relationship

Phone

Backpacking and Climbing Experience.

1. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being best) how would you rate your fitness level?
2. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your mountaineering (backpacking/climbing) experience?
3. Describe your longest backpack trip.
4. List the 2 most significant mountains you have climbed, starting with the most recent. (Include name of mountain, altitude, route, and date of each climb)
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
5. Describe your outdoor skills and experience.
6. Describe the most extreme weather situation you have experienced in a remote setting.
7. What strengths do you feel you will bring to our group?
8. Do you have concerns about the physical demands of this trip?
9. Do you have any medical conditions that could compromise your personal or group success?
10. Do you have all the required equipment for this expedition? (refer to the gear list). Yes No

11. If no, what equipment do you need to purchase, borrow, or rent?