

Custom BWCAW Trips

Go outside together. Keep going...



WOLF RIDGESM
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

6282 Cranberry Road, Finland, MN 55603
218-353-7414

www.wolf-ridge.org

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Welcome to Wolf Ridge

Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center is an accredited residential environmental education school for persons of all ages and abilities. We are located on 2000 acres of land, which includes Wolf and Raven Lakes, nearly a mile of the Baptism River, and a half mile of Sawmill Creek. Trails, covering rugged terrain, lead to many overlooks, lakes, streams, and activity sites. The main buildings are located on a plateau overlooking Lake Superior.

We offer immersion programs which involve direct observation and participation in outdoor experiences and focus on ecology and science, human culture and history, personal growth, group building and outdoor recreation.

Preparing for Your Trip

Before you arrive

Please fill out the pink [Health, Information and Release](#) and the blue [Group Information and Agreement](#) forms. These forms have two sides to complete. The information provided on these forms is confidential and will only be used by staff members who work directly with your group. Please return them to Wolf Ridge no later than two weeks prior to your canoe trip.



How do I get to Wolf Ridge?

Wolf Ridge is near Finland, MN, about 250 miles north of Minneapolis/St. Paul, and 70 miles north of Duluth. To get to Wolf Ridge ELC from Duluth follow these directions:

- From Interstate 35 North, take Highway 61 out of Duluth and go 66 miles to Little Marais
- There is a brown highway sign for Wolf Ridge; turn left on Cty Rd. 6.
- Drive 4 miles to the sign for Wolf Ridge
- Turn left on Cranberry Road which winds for 3 miles up to the buildings on the bluff. Follow the one-way circle to the right.

Check-in

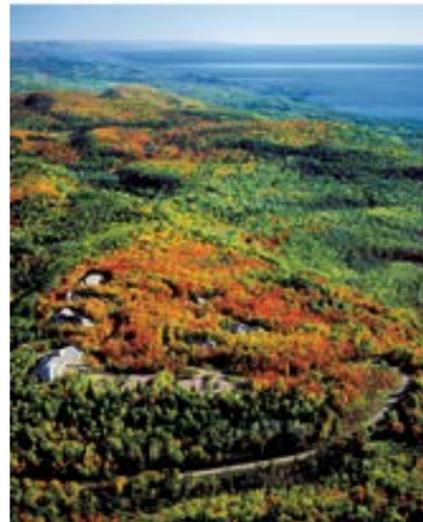
Check-in takes place at the Main Office, the first building on the right as you reach the top of the driveway. You should check in at 3 pm on Sunday. You are welcome to arrive before 3 pm to hike or just tour the campus on your own. However, your naturalist guide will not be available before 3 pm.

At check-in, you will meet your naturalist guide and get keys to your dorm room. You can also settle any remaining balances at that time. Wolf Ridge accepts major credit cards and personal checks. From there you will be able to move into your dorm room and begin learning more about your trip. When you are finished unpacking, please move your vehicle to the parking lot near the office.

Correspondence

It is possible to send and receive correspondence while at Wolf Ridge. All correspondence, including regular mail, e-mail, and faxes will be delivered to your family before or after your trip. You can purchase stamps and envelopes in the office.

E-mail Messages can be delivered to you through e-mail at the following address: mail@wolf-ridge.org. Please include the program name and a participant's name at the beginning of the message. If using the Wolf ridge e-mail address, messages are checked for the last time at noon on Friday of your program. Any messages received after that time may not be delivered and may not be returned to the sender. To ensure that your message is received, please be sure to send it before noon on the day before departure. If there is an urgent message, please inform your Naturalist guide or the Wolf Ridge office. If you have a computer with wireless internet access, you can also get service in our office.



Faxes You may also receive faxes at 218-353-7762. Please make sure to have the fax clearly labeled with your name so that it gets to you. Outgoing faxes cost \$1.00 per page.

Telephone use During your trip, you will be mostly unreachable by phone. Cell phone coverage in the NE MN is spotty, especially in the BWCAW. If you do bring a cell phone to the BWCAW, please plan to use it for emergencies only.

Accommodations



While at Wolf Ridge, your group will stay in our West dormitory. Rooms are simply furnished with bunk beds. Groups will share a communal group bathrooms with other trip participants of similar gender. Linens are not provided. Please bring a set of sheets and a pillow for each group member to use on the bunk mattresses. You may also bring a blanket if you wish. Coin washers and dryers are located in the dorm; they cost \$.50 each per load. Liquid detergent is available in our store for \$.25 per load. While on trail, Your group will stay in 4 or 6 person tents. Your naturalist guide will stay in his/her own tent. You may store personal items at Wolf Ridge while you are on trail.

Meals

During your time on campus at Wolf Ridge, Meals are served cafeteria style in the Dining hall at 7:30 am, 12 pm and 5 pm. We ask that you bus your dishes to the dish room after eating. Vegetarian meals are available upon request. Please indicate any food restrictions or dietary requirements on the pink health form. (Also see Wilderness Menu section)



The Wolf Ridge Store

The Wolf Ridge store sells Wolf Ridge souvenirs such as books, t-shirts, hats, posters, and postcards. You can shop online at our web site at www.wolf-ridge.org. The store is open on Saturdays, 9-10 am.

Emergencies

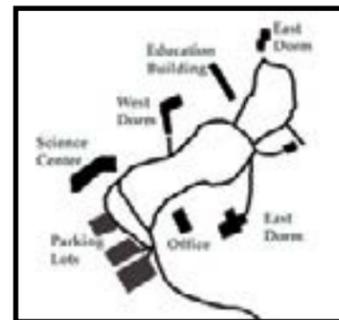
Wolf Ridge trip leaders are trained in Wilderness First Aid, CPR and either Lifeguarding or Wilderness Water Safety. While on trail, they carry a cell phone that is used for emergency purposes only. While at Wolf Ridge, emergency care and response may vary from 10-30 minutes. In the BWCAW, the response time may take hours. Such is the nature of wilderness travel.

Feedback

Every year Wolf Ridge uses the participant comments made on the program feedback forms to improve our Custom Group BWCAW programming. Please take the time to provide constructive and candid feedback on the forms that your Naturalist guide gives you after the completion of your trip. You are also welcome to contact the Adventure Education Coordinator to share your concerns and/or comments.

Check out

Breakfast is served at 7:30 a.m. on your last morning. Your family should check out of your dorm room by 9a.m. After checking out of the dorm, you are welcome to stay and explore until 4 pm.



A BWCAW Adventure

“I have found that wilderness travel both reveals and builds character. There can be no hiding of your true character while on an extended wilderness trip. The best and worst in a person rises to the surface. Yet for those who stick with the struggle and wrestle with the difficulties of trail life, their character will be honed, sharpened, and strengthened. Strong character and a deepening sense of self are two by-products of wilderness travel.” *Rollie Johnson The Boundary Water Journal*

Portages

These are the foot paths that connect lakes. Paddlers must pick up their canoes and packs and carry them. Portages are measured in rods (one rod = 16.5 ft.) You can expect portages to be difficult at times. You may encounter mud, rocks, beaver ponds, hills, uneven ground, fallen trees, or flat open trails. They are a symbolic challenge of the BWCAW. Most paddlers recall their portaging experiences with pride and satisfaction (and some “UFF-DA'S!”).



Campsites

All BWCAW campsites are designated and non-reserveable. You will hopefully stay at some campsites that you find beautiful and appealing. But because they are on a first come first serve basis, no one can predict whether your group will be the first to arrive at the “most desirable” campsite on the lake. You may need to paddle farther than planned to reach an open site.

Solitude

Over 200,000 kids, adults, camps, and families will visit the BWCA from May to September. You will likely see other groups; sometimes from across the lake, and sometimes parked in front of you at your next portage. At other times, you may see nothing except the sky, the land, and the water. “Crowds” are relative to the individual paddler’s perspectives and expectations.



Leave No Trace

The US Forest Service requires visitors to the BWCAW to practice Leave No Trace camping techniques. Wolf Ridge models and teaches this wilderness ethic to groups. Before each trip, your Naturalist Guide will introduce Leave No Trace guidelines. Examples include: packing out all food and trash, leaving campsites cleaner than you found them, cleaning and washing away from water sources, collecting firewood away from the campsite, and cooking only on durable surfaces or designated fire grates.

Challenges and rewards

You may encounter wind, rain, thunder, lightning, and even hail. But it is a breathtaking sight to watch the rainbow curve down over the pines after a storm passes. Mosquitoes and flies may buzz in your ears and nip at your skin. But with some patience and flexibility you can handle the bugs just fine; Someone (you!) might burn dinner; but there is more in the pack. There may be other adventures and challenges you did not predict. Your spirit and sense of humor will serve your group well. Remember that your BWCAW experiences will become stories that participants will laugh about and share for years to come.



Wild Classes

Learning and fun are at the heart of each Wolf Ridge custom canoe trip. Each day, your naturalist guide will offer trail classes that provide opportunities to explore and discover a wide variety of BWCAW related topics. Each experiential, activity driven class takes advantage of the wilderness all around and the sense of wonder inside us all. Year after year, participants have said that wild classes were one of their favorite parts of the trip. Below is a sample list of the topics that your group may explore.

- Wildflower Walks
- Campfires
- Lake/Stream Ecology
- Wild Insects
- Wild Trees
- Fur Trade History
- Ferns and fungi

- Wilderness Navigation
- Wilderness Cooking
- Wild Birds
- Wild Crafts
- Ojibwe Stargazing
- Critter Talks
- BWCAW Geology

- Wild Edibles
- Weather Forecasting
- Citizen Science
- Ojibwe Culture
- Wilderness Ethics
- Logging History
- "Wild" Paddles



The Wilderness Menu



Wolf Ridge has tried a wide variety of trail foods over the years. We refined our menu to offerings that are tasty, appealing and easy to prepare when people are hungry. We believe cooking and eating while on trail should be a fun and nutritious experience. We are always open to ideas, including dietary restrictions and preferences, provided we have the resources and time to implement them.

Lunch and Snack foods

- Pitas, bagels, crackers
- Rainy day quick soups
- Beef summer sausage
- Beef jerky
- Cheese

Suppers

- Mac and Cheese
- Pizza/Calzones;
- Alpine pasta;
- Burritos/ quesadillas
- Thai pasta/rice

Beverages

- Fruit drinks
- Hot cocoa
- Hot cider
- Coffee & Tea

Breakfast foods

- Bagels, PB&J
- milk and dried fruit
- Nutrigrain fruit bars
- Pancakes
- Oatmeal w/dried fruit
- Berry muffins
- Fresh fruit

Peanut butter and jelly

- Hummus mix
- Tabouli Mix
- Snack'ens mix
- Dried fruit mix
- Wolf Ridge trail mix
- Granola bars
- Fresh fruit and veggies

Desserts

- S'mores
- Cheesecake
- Pudding
- Brownies
- Apple crisp
- PB Cup



General Program Schedule

Sunday

- 3-5 pm** Check in. Meet your naturalist guide. Trip orientation. You will learn more about your BWCAW itinerary, get acquainted with equipment (i.g. set up tents, light camp stoves, portage canoes, etc.), review your menu and learn how to pack your supplies. Orientation is a perfect time to address any questions or concerns.
- 5 pm** Dinner in the Dining Hall. (SEE PINK FORM)
- Evening** Finish up any remaining orientation topics. As the evening closes, your family is invited to participate in evening programs going on that night, or to retire for the evening to get a good night's sleep.

Monday

- Bright and early** Your family will take a bag lunch on the road and head towards your BWCAW entry point.
- Mid morning** You will be sitting in a canoe in the BWCAW!

Monday- Thursday/ Friday

- Day and Night** BWCAW Adventure! Learning, fun, exploraton, discovery, portaging, paddling, and relaxing!

Friday

- 11 am** Pick up at BWCAW exit point. Your Wolf Ridge driver will provide a cool treat and bag lunches. You will stop somewhere on the way back to Wolf Ridge to enjoy a picnic lunch.
- 1-2 pm** Arrive back at Wolf Ridge. Wolf Ridge asks that families participate in unpacking and cleaning up your trip. Then you can head off for nice hot showers!
- 3:15-4:45 pm** Your family has the option to sign up for rock climbing. Otherwise, you are free to relax. (SEE PINK FORM)
- 5 pm** Dinner in the Dining Hall. (SEE PINK FORM)
- Evening** Free time. Feel free to join in any evening programs going on that night. Check with your naturalist.



Saturday

- 7:30 am** Breakfast in Dining Hall
- 9 am** Checkout. Please come see us again! And spread any good news you have about the trip!

“...The way Wolf Ridge does it is excellent... The wilderness naturalists from Wolf Ridge have been the best anywhere in our opinion for teaching and helping us be in the wild...”

Family Canoe Trip Participant

Packing Information

General

- Avoid cotton clothing. Cotton is hard to dry when wet.
- Fleece, wool, or synthetics (polypropylene, etc) are good choices that will stay dry and warm.
- Think layers. They allow you to adapt to various conditions. Lake Superior weather can range from very hot to very cold- all in the same day!
- If unsure, pack extra. Your guide will help you sort it out.
- Think light. Bring items that will double for different purposes, (e.g. rain gear can double as a windbreaker/paddling jacket).
- Be economical. Borrow what you can. If you do need to purchase new items, quality rain gear and a decent pair of water shoes will serve you well.

Footwear

Wolf Ridge requests that participants wear close-toed shoes with good ankle support for portaging canoes and packs over rugged and uneven trails. (past participants have been very happy they took this advice seriously) Portaging shoes will likely get very wet and muddy, and stay that way for the majority of the trip. Plan to pack a comfortable pair of shoes or sandals to wear while in camp (dry shoes). Also avoid cotton socks, which are more likely to give you blisters when they get wet from water or sweat.



Wolf Ridge strongly recommends that you wear shoes when wading and swimming near shore.

Hooks, lures and sharp rocks are a hazard to feet. Light, quick drying and inexpensive water shoes ("aquasocks", water shoes, etc.) are perfect for swimming. Closed toed are better than open toed. Remember, if you hurt your feet, it can ruin your trip! So, yes, Wolf Ridge has recommended 3 pairs of shoes for the trip. Each serves its specific and unique purpose.

Fishing in the BWCAW

Fishing is a favorite activity in the BWCAW. Minnesota requires people 16 and older to have a Minnesota fishing license. You can purchase bait/licenses on your way to the BWCAW. Your guide may or may not have much fishing expertise; including the ability to clean a fish. Upon request, Wolf Ridge will pack the necessary ingredients for an authentic BWCAW fish meal: lemon, fish batter, an onion, oil, and butter. The suggested tackle box is just that, a set of suggestions. Feel free to drop in at a local store or research the internet for more information about what works in the BWCAW.



Electronic devices

Although Wolf Ridge does not require you to leave all electronic devices behind, we strongly encourage groups to unpack video games and music players before heading into the BWCAW. If you do wish to carry a cell phone, please reserve it for emergency/camera use only. Wireless signal strength varies based on wireless carriers, location, and weather conditions. Signal strength may be intermittent or nonexistent at times.

Tobacco and Alcohol

Wolf Ridge only allows smoking in designated outside areas around the campus.

Alcohol- Wine and/or beer only. Allowed only on adult or family trips- where all participants know each other. If your adult or family group wishes to bring a small amount of wine/beer into the BWCAW, you must pack it in plastic containers. Aluminum and glass are prohibited. There is no alcohol or tobacco allowed on youth group trips. During youth programming, Wolf Ridge prohibits alcohol use by participants on campus. If you have questions, please contact the Adventure Education Coordinator at Wolf Ridge.

5 Day BWCAW

* - Wolf Ridge can provide this item

CLOTHING- Bold items strongly encouraged

- _____ **Sturdy, "wet" portaging shoes**
- _____ **Raingear; coat/pants or poncho**
- _____ Clothing for time at Wolf Ridge
- _____ Long pants- on trail
- _____ Long pants- in camp
- _____ T-shirt- on trail
- _____ T-shirt- in camp
- _____ Long sleeve shirt- in camp
- _____ Sweater/jacket; fleece/wool
- _____ Windproof jacket
- _____ Shorts- one pair; on trail/in camp
- _____ Swimsuit
- _____ Socks-3-4 pair; wool/synthetic
- _____ Underwear/long underwear
- _____ Lightweight gloves; for cool nights
- _____ Brimmed hat
- _____ Stocking cap; in case of cool nights
- _____ Light, comfy in camp shoes
- _____ **Swimming shoes (see previous page)**

MISCELLANEOUS

- _____ Bedding for dorm; sheets and pillow
- _____ Soap/shampoo and towel for dorm use
- _____ Sleeping bag and stuff sack
- _____ Water bottle*
- _____ Personal medications
- _____ Headlamp/small flashlight
- _____ Toiletries; small travel amounts
- _____ Sunscreen; spf 15 or greater
- _____ Sunglasses
- _____ Stuff sacks for clothing
- _____ Bandannas

OPTIONAL

- _____ Fishing equipment; rod/reel, tackle
- _____ Journal or book to read
- _____ Small pocket tool; (i.e. Swiss Army)
- _____ Camera/film
- _____ Binoculars
- _____ Field guides
- _____ Playing cards
- _____ Dice/games
- _____ Head net
- _____ Insect repellent; non-aerosol
- _____ Canoe paddle*
- _____ Sleeping pad*

Equipment Wolf Ridge provides

- 17 ft. Wenonah kevlar canoes
- Extrasport PFD's
- Carlisle plastic paddles
- Granite Gear portage packs
- Eureka 2, 4, or 6 person tents
- Primus multi fuel stoves
- Cook kits
- Backcountry oven
- MSR water filters
- Emergency cell phone
- First Aid kit
- Self inflating sleeping pads
- Utility kit
- Repair kit
- Bear ropes and pulley

Sample BWCAW tackle box

- small,compact tackle box
- nail clippers on lanyard
- fillet knife
- needle nose pliers with cutter on lanyard
- extra spool of line (6 lb. test)
- steel leaders 6-8 inches in length
- swivels
- stringer

Tackle Suggestions

- red and white spoon (1/2 oz-3/4oz)
- Sutton spoon (silver)
- Smithwick rattlin' Rogue
- Rapala 3-4, sizes 9-18, mix floaters & divers
- Rattle Traps
- Lazy Ikes
- Possibly one Shad Rap or one Fat Rap
- fuzzy grub tails
- Swedish Pimple, yellow or red
- Mepps spinners #2 or #3 with buck tails

For Live Bait

- lead head jigs, 1/4oz-1/2oz, assorted colors
- slip bobbers with matching split shot
- Lindy rigs either plain hook floater or spinner
- plain hooks