

**WRMC**  
WILDERNESS RISK  
MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

**2013**  
CONFERENCE  
PROGRAM

**20TH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE**



**PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FOR  
CHALLENGING ISSUES**

**JACKSON LAKE LODGE**  
GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK  
SEPTEMBER 30–OCTOBER 2, 2013

# Welcome to the 2013 Wilderness Risk Management Conference

2013 marks the 20th year of conversation among hundreds of organizations, a dialogue that has driven the evolution of risk management in wilderness programs. The WRMC balances new and evolving topics and speakers with the fundamentals to ensure that everyone finds their learning edge. We have organized the workshops into six main tracks so you can get the most out of your WRMC experience. Follow along one track or mix and match to meet your specific needs.

The next few pages have information about conference schedule times, workshop descriptions, speakers, exhibitors/sponsors, and Jackson Lake Lodge.

If you have any questions or need any support during the conference, please look for our staff in black vests and name tags that say "Ask Me." Our staff office is located in the Trumpeter Room. We hope your organization benefits from your experience at the 2013 WRMC, and we hope you have a great time!

Sincerely,  
Liz Tuohy  
WRMC Steering Committee Chair

## Important Information

### Explorers Room - Exhibit Hall - The Heart of the WRMC

From the opening event to closing remarks, you will want to spend your spare time in the Explorers Room located on the main floor. This space is the hub of the conference where you can mingle with exhibitors and learn about their services and products, network with peers through formal and informal channels, and re-energize with coffee and snacks. Here you can search and learn about the history of wilderness risk management while you enjoy the view of the Grand Tetons.

### Exhibitor Reception - Opening Address - Award Ceremony

Start off the WRMC with a trip around the Exhibit Hall for the chance to meet this year's exhibitors. From 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. on Monday, September 30th, join us in the Explorers Room for light appetizers and cash bar, prize raffles, and poster presentations.

At 6:00 p.m. grab a chair for a video premiere and opening remarks from WRMC Steering Committee members. This year's recipient of the Reb Gregg Wilderness Risk Management Award will be announced and John Gans will present his opening address titled *Education without Experience: How Does it Work?*

Events will conclude at 7:40 p.m. to allow enough time for you to get dinner and catch up with friends and colleagues.

### Keynote Address

At 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday morning in the Explorers Room, Renny Jackson will discuss the evolution of Alpine Search and Rescue in Grand Teton and Denali National Parks – how it has changed, what is different, and how we try to manage the risk that is involved. Workshops will begin at 10:30 a.m.

### Keynote Address and Dinner

Wrap up the conference in style by joining us Wednesday evening for a social cocktail hour at 5:00 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. The final WRMC presentation will feature Laurence Gonzales, whose talk based on the book *Deep Survival*, will

explore how the natural functioning of the brain, even when it's working normally, can lead us into systematic errors. These errors can be trivial (can't find my keys right under my nose) to fatal or near-fatal (falling off a cliff).

During the social hour and following his keynote address, Laurence will sign copies of his books *Deep Survival: Who Lives, Who Dies, and Why* and *Surviving Survival: The Art and Science of Resilience*.

### Survey Participation

Please support the educational growth of our speakers and sessions by participating in the online survey at the end of each day. This information is used to make improvements and provide feedback to speakers. Your opinion is highly valued. Prizes will be given at random to people who complete the surveys.

## Presentation Tracks

Emergency Planning & Crisis Response  
Field Practices  
Legal Considerations  
Program Administration  
Staff Training & Decision Making  
Sector Specific Issues & Repeat Presentations

**Core Workshop** Look for this symbol to identify workshops that provide a fundamental introduction to risk management and mitigation strategies. If you are new to the WRMC, we strongly encourage you to attend the core workshops.

## Pre-Conference Schedule

### Saturday, September 28, 2013

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<b>WFR Recert by NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute</b> Gates Richards and Erica Linnell, <i>Grizzly</i>
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### Sunday, September 29, 2013

7:00–8:00a.m.	<b>Pre-Conference Check-In</b> , <i>Lower Lobby, Activities Desk</i>
8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.	<b>Effective Outdoor Program Design and Management</b> Paul Nicolazzo and John Fair, <i>Wapiti 1</i>
	<b>Improvised Rock Rescue</b> , <i>Exum Mountain Guides (offsite)</i>
	<b>Inclusion and Cultural Competency for the Outdoor Professional</b> Aparna Rajagopol-Durbin and Pam Rosal, <i>Antelope 2</i>
	<b>Navigating Health, Safety, Security, and Risk Management Abroad</b> Bill Frederick, <i>Buffalo</i>
	<b>NOLS Risk Management Training</b> Dave Yacubian, Shana Tarter, and Jaime Musnicki, <i>Osprey</i>
	<b>WFR Recert by NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute, cont.</b> Gates Richards and Erica Linnell, <i>Grizzly</i>
	<b>River Rescue Certification</b> KC Bess, <i>Mad River Boat Trips (offsite)</i>

### Monday, September 30, 2013

7:00–8:00a.m.	<b>Pre-Conference Check-In</b> , <i>Trumpeter</i>
8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.	<b>Effective Outdoor Program Design and Management, cont.</b> Paul Nicolazzo and John Fair, <i>Wapiti 1</i>
	<b>Inclusion and Cultural Competency for the Outdoor Professional, cont.</b> Aparna Rajagopol-Durbin and Pam Rosal, <i>Antelope 2</i>
	<b>Navigating Health, Safety, Security, and Risk Management Abroad, cont.</b> Bill Frederick, <i>Buffalo</i>
	<b>NOLS Risk Management Training, cont.</b> Dave Yacubian, Shana Tarter, and Jaime Musnicki, <i>Osprey</i>
	<b>WFR Recert by NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute, cont.</b> Gates Richards and Erica Linnell, <i>Grizzly</i>
	<b>River Rescue Certification, cont.</b> KC Bess, <i>Mad River Boat Trips (offsite)</i>
8:00a.m – 12:00p.m.	<b>Discussion on Volunteer Leader Risk Management</b> Alex Kosseff, Mel Mac Innis, and Catherine Hansen-Stamp, <i>Moose</i>
	<b>Performing Under Pressure</b> Deb Ajango, <i>Antelope 1</i>
1:00–5:00p.m.	<b>And the Winner is... (?) Hot Issues, Hot Cases</b> Catherine Hansen-Stamp and Reb Gregg, <i>Antelope 1</i>
	<b>Parent Phone Call Lab</b> Katie Baum Mettenbrink, <i>Moose</i>
	<b>Risk Management in Wilderness Therapy: Critical Intersections of Research and Practice</b> Stephen Javorski, <i>Wapiti 2</i>

## Conference Opening Schedule

### Monday, September 30, 2013

4:00 – 6:00p.m.	Conference Check-In, <i>Explorers Room</i>
5:00 – 6:00p.m.	Exhibitor's Reception Giveaways, Appetizers, Cash Bar, Poster Sessions, <i>Explorers Room</i>
6:00 – 7:10p.m.	Opening Remarks and Address, <i>Explorers Room</i>
	<b>Education without Experience: How Does it Work?</b> John Gans
7:10 – 7:40p.m.	Charles (Reb) Gregg Wilderness Risk Management Award Ceremony, <i>Explorers Room</i>

# Conference Schedule

## Tuesday, October 1, 2013

8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showroom, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
	<b>EMERGENCY PLANNING &amp; CRISIS RESPONSE</b>	<b>FIELD PRACTICES</b>	<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>
8:30a.m. – 9:30a.m.	Keynote Address, <b>A Perspective on the Incredible Changes in Mountain Rescue</b> , Renny Jackson, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
9:30a.m. – 10:00a.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
10:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Crisis Management: A Preplan in Action</b> (repeated on Wednesday) Drew Leemon <i>Wapiti</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Medical Topics: Old, New, and Controversial</b> David Johnson, MD <i>Grizzly</i>	<b>Employment, Staffing, Compensation, and Other Legal Stuff</b> James Pearson <i>Osprey</i>
11:30a.m. – 1:00p.m.	Lunch		
1:00p.m. – 2:30p.m.	<b>This is Not JUST A Drill!</b> Mark Vermeal <i>Wapiti</i>	<b>Managing Challenging Mental Health and Behavioral Issues in the Field</b> Cynthia Stevens, MD <i>Antelope</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>The Law Says 'Yes' to Risk</b> Reb Gregg <i>Osprey</i>
2:30p.m. – 3:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
3:00p.m. – 4:30p.m.	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Risk Management: The Traumatic Aftermath</b> Will Marling <i>Wapiti</i>	<b>SAR Panel Discussion</b> John Gookin, Will Smith, MD, Will White; Shana Tarter, facilitator <i>Osprey</i>	<b>Managing Legal Issues After a Serious Incident: What to Do, What to Say</b> Frances Mock, <i>Antelope</i>
4:45p.m. – 6:00p.m.	Structured Networking, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
6:00p.m. – 7:00p.m.	Bear Demonstration Session, John Gookin, <i>Explorers Room Patio</i>		

## Wednesday, October 2, 2013

8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showroom, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
	<b>EMERGENCY PLANNING &amp; CRISIS RESPONSE</b>	<b>FIELD PRACTICES</b>	<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>
8:30a.m. – 10:00a.m.	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Crisis Communication in the Digital Age: The Basics Still Matter</b> , Bruce Palmer, <i>Wapiti</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Accidents in Outdoor Pursuits: Assessment and Prevention Approaches</b> Jed Williamson, <i>Moose</i>	<b>Discovery and Depositions Can Be Fun</b> Wilma Gray <i>Buffalo</i>
10:00a.m. – 10:30a.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
10:30a.m. – 11:30a.m.	<b>The Benefits of an External Risk Management Review</b> John Fair <i>Osprey</i>	<b>Risk Managing a Wilderness Fast: Why, When and How to Facilitate a Fast in the Backcountry</b> Paul Stonehouse <i>Moose</i>	<b>'Standards in the Industry:' What Does this Phrase Really Mean and How do Standards Impact Your Programs and Practices?</b> Tracey Knutson, <i>Grizzly</i>
11:30a.m. – 1:00p.m.	Lunch		
1:00p.m. – 2:30p.m.	<b>Getting Beyond Operator Error: Using Systems to Analyze Accidents</b> Jeff Jackson, <i>Grizzly</i>	<b>'I'm Not Like the Others:' 3 Activities to Minimize the Emotional Risk of Exclusion</b> , Aparna Rojagopal-Durbin, Pam Rosal, <i>Osprey</i>	<b>'My Feet Are Cold' Mock Trial</b> Reb Gregg, Catherine Hansen-Stamp <i>Wapiti</i>
2:30p.m. – 3:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
3:00p.m. – 4:30p.m.	<b>Performing Under Pressure</b> Deb Ajango <i>Grizzly</i>	<b>Bear Habitat Field Practices</b> Katie Baum Mettenbrink <i>Wapiti</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Participant Agreement: Is it Really Better than the Paper it's Written on?</b> Tony Clapp, <i>Osprey</i>
5:00p.m. – 7:30p.m.	Social Hour, Book Signing; Keynote Dinner at 6:30, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
7:30p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Closing Remarks, Keynote Address and Book Signing, <i>Explorers Room</i> <b>Intelligent Mistakes: Why Smart People Do Stupid Things</b> , Laurence Gonzales		

# Conference Schedule

## Tuesday, October 1, 2013

8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showroom, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
	<b>PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>STAFF TRAINING &amp; DECISION MAKING</b>	<b>SECTOR SPECIFIC ISSUES &amp; REPEAT PRESENTATIONS</b>
8:30a.m. – 9:30a.m.	Keynote Address, <b>A Perspective on the Incredible Changes in Mountain Rescue</b> , Renny Jackson, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
9:30a.m. – 10:00a.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
10:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.	<b>Adapt-Ability: Working with People with Disabilities in an Adventure Setting</b> Becky Van Horsen, Eric Bonin, Janine Donald, <i>Moose</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Training to Failure and Other Unlikely and Highly Effective Training Strategies</b> (repeated on Wednesday) Jeff Jackson, <i>Antelope</i>	<b>Incident Trends in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare: What do They Mean to Me?</b> Stephen Javorski <i>Buffalo</i>
11:30a.m. – 1:00p.m.	Lunch		
1:00p.m. – 2:30p.m.	<b>Bloodborne and Other Pathogens in the Backcountry</b> Steve Neal, David Johnson, MD <i>Buffalo</i>	<b>Central Gulley Avalanche, A Case Study: How Good Intentions Slide You Straight to Hell</b> Tom Pollard, Will White <i>Grizzly</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Higher Expectations: The Professionalizing of International Trip Leading</b> Bill Frederick, <i>Moose</i>
2:30p.m. – 3:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
3:00p.m. – 4:30p.m.	<b>Contracting with Third Parties</b> Catherine Hansen-Stamp, Todd Duncan, Justin Talbot <i>Buffalo</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Where Are We Now? 20 Years of Decision Making</b> (repeated on Wednesday) Brendan Madden, Tod Schimelpfenig <i>Grizzly</i>	<b>Chance and Randomness: The Complications of Managing Incidents Overseas</b> Gennifre Hartman, Aaron Slosberg, Jennifer Royall, <i>Moose</i>
4:45p.m. – 6:00p.m.	Structured Networking, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
6:00p.m. – 7:00p.m.	Bear Demonstration Session, John Gookin, <i>Explorers Room Patio</i>		

## Wednesday, October 2, 2013

8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showroom, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
	<b>PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>STAFF TRAINING &amp; DECISION MAKING</b>	<b>SECTOR SPECIFIC ISSUES &amp; REPEAT PRESENTATIONS</b>
8:30a.m. – 10:00a.m.	<b>Mission Creep: When the Tail Wags the Dog</b> Steve Smith <i>Osprey</i>	<b>Stupidity Explored: Mindful Leadership Amplified</b> Lester Zook <i>Grizzly</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Training to Failure and Other Unlikely and Highly Effective Training Strategies</b> Jeff Jackson, <i>Antelope</i>
10:00a.m. – 10:30a.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
10:30a.m. – 11:30a.m.	<b>Social Media's Heuristic Trap and the Role of Digital Immigrants in Teaching Risk Management to Digital Natives</b> Jerry Isaak, <i>Wapiti</i>	<b>Keeping Field Staff Fresh: A Model for Ongoing Training</b> Rebecca Bear, Jeremy Oyen <i>Antelope</i>	<b>College, University, and Municipality Risk Management Today</b> Jeannette Stawski, Tim Moore <i>Buffalo</i>
11:30a.m. – 1:00p.m.	Lunch		
1:00p.m. – 2:30p.m.	<b>What You Need to Know when Applying for or Renewing Insurance</b> Don Pachner, <i>Buffalo</i>	<b>Decision Making: Errors of Perception</b> Gates Richards <i>Antelope</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Crisis Management: A Preplan in Action</b> Drew Leemon <i>Moose</i>
2:30p.m. – 3:00p.m.	Exhibitor Showcase and Break, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
3:00p.m. – 4:30p.m.	<b>How Managing Risk for Military Veterans will Improve Your Whole Program</b> , Stacy Bare, Kevin Heiner, Jarrod Ball, <i>Buffalo</i>	<b>Three Plug and Play Staff Training Activities</b> Shana Tarter <i>Antelope</i>	<b>Core Workshop</b> <b>Where Are We Now? 20 Years of Decision Making</b> Brendan Madden, Tod Schimelpfenig <i>Moose</i>
5:00p.m. – 7:30p.m.	Social Hour, Booksigning; Keynote Dinner at 6:30, <i>Explorers Room</i>		
7:30p.m. – 9:00p.m.	Closing Remarks, Keynote Address and Book Signing, <i>Explorers Room</i> <b>Intelligent Mistakes: Why Smart People Do Stupid Things</b> , Laurence Gonzales		



## Presentation Descriptions

### Pre-Conference Schedule

#### WFR Recert by NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute

September 28–30, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Gates Richards and Erica Linnell

*Grizzly*

This three-day, scenario-based course is designed as a review and practice of evacuation and decision-making guidelines. It also provides wilderness medicine practitioners with current updates in the wilderness medicine field. This course may be used to recertify Wilderness First Responder (WFR) and Wilderness EMT (wilderness portion only) certifications. You must possess a current WFR certification of at least 72 hours to recertify through this course.

#### Effective Outdoor Program Design & Management

September 29–30, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Paul Nicolazzo and John Fair **New Speaker**

*Wapiti 1*

This two-day workshop examines the complex relationships surrounding outdoor program design and management from both the field instructor and program administration perspectives using digital presentations, interactive discussion, video, and small group activities that let you see your program and trips in a new light. The overarching goal of the workshop is to introduce a comprehensive management system using clear operational language and concepts that you can immediately apply in your own organization.

#### **New Topic** Inclusion & Cultural Competency for the Outdoor Professional

September 29–30, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Aparna Rajagopal-Durbin **New Speaker** and Pam Rosal

**New Speaker**

*Antelope 2*

We want experiential education to reflect the diversity of the world around us, but are we prepared to create a culture that welcomes everyone? What implications does cultural competency have on risk management? As we expand our programs to reach a wider audience—women, people of color, veterans, Baby Boomers, LGBTQ community members, global citizens, etc.—we need to be ready to provide this audience with a positive experience. This workshop will help you (1) foster an inclusive environment in your workplace, both with a diverse participant group and colleagues; (2) teach your participants to do the same; (3) improve risk management throughout your program; and (4) better respond to inclusion-related incidents.

#### **New Topic** Navigating Health, Safety, Security, & Risk Management Abroad

September 29–30, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Bill Frederick

*Buffalo*

International programming often involves flipping the formula for low actual risk/high perceived risk to high actual risk/low perceived risk. This workshop will cover what you need to be able to do in regards to health, safety, security, and risk management abroad and the associated skills, knowledge, and information access that you need to inform your critical thinking for prevention of and response.

#### NOLS Risk Management Training

September 29–30, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Dave Yacubian, Shana Tarter, and Jaime Musnicki

*Osprey*

Using lecture, discussion, exercises, and hands-on scenarios, this two-day training will provide a structured approach and the necessary tools to build a risk management plan appropriate for your organization. You will walk away with a detailed action plan designed to improve your curriculum, administrative process, staff hiring, field support services, and crisis planning.

#### River Rescue Certification

September 29–30, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

KC Bess **New Speaker**

*Mad River Boat Trips*

A dynamic, fast-moving course specifically written and designed for professional river guides, private boaters, and kayakers. Basic river skills are a prerequisite. Emphasis is on identifying hazards, thinking through rescues, and on rescue itself, both for yourself and others. As a boater or instructor, this is the class you'll want to help you stay safe and know what to do if something goes wrong.

#### Improvised Rock Rescue

September 29, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

*Exum Mountain Guides*

This one-day clinic is designed to give recreational and professional climbers, at a wide range of ability and skill level, the tools they need to quickly and competently perform an improvised rescue of an injured patient. There will be a variety of technical skills stations to both learn and practice the components of an improvised rescue in the vertical environment. These skills will be reinforced through the use of scenarios. This clinic will be held outside at a cliff close to the conference site in Grand Teton National Park and will be taught by technical rescue experts from Exum Mountain Guides and the University of Utah's Center for Remote Rescue Training.

#### A Discussion on Volunteer Leader Risk Management

September 30, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Alex Kosseff, Melanie Mac Innis, and Catherine Hansen-Stamp

*Moose*

As risk management in professionally led outdoor programs continues to improve, how do volunteer-based programs fit in? As leader certification increases, how are volunteers trained? What should expectations be for volunteers working with youth? How do we pay for it all? With a focus on small-group discussions, the topics will be adjusted to fit the interests of participants. Catherine will assist with legal issues. Building on eight years of related WRMC sessions, we'll explore next steps for volunteer programs.

### **Performing Under Pressure**

September 30, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Deb Ajango

*Antelope 1*

This workshop will provide audience members with an understanding of how people tend to react, both cognitively and behaviorally, in stressful situations. By using research and a variety of case studies, the presenter will explore factors that can influence one's response in an emergency. The presenter also will offer suggestions on how one might modify his or her organizational emergency action plan so that desired behaviors are more likely. Following the didactic portion of this presentation, audience members will be given time and guidance so that they can create checklists, scenarios, and trainings that then can be used to improve field performance during a crisis. The workshop will end with participants sharing their ideas.

### **And the Winner is...(?) Hot Issues, Hot Cases**

September 30, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Catherine Hansen-Stamp and Reb Gregg

*Antelope 1*

In this interactive session, we will ask attendees to consider four or five 2012-13 court opinions addressing significant legal issues in the industry. Participants will act as plaintiffs or defendants to urge their position on cases, explore settlement negotiations, and discuss issues including the duty of care owed to participants, inherent risks and assumption of risks, releases of liability, when the written or spoken word can create problems, and issues involving protection from claims of minors.

### **Parent Phone Call Lab**

September 30, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Katie Baum Mettenbrink

*Moose*

Test your conflict communication skills in this interactive Parent Phone Call Lab. Spend three hours preparing for and practicing challenging phone call scenarios and hone your skills by serving as both caller and coach. After each call, the "parent," an experienced program administrator, will offer feedback to help you develop your skills. We will review successes and persistent challenges, and you will leave with strategies for applying lessons learned in your own program.

### **Risk Management in Wilderness Therapy: Critical Intersections of Research & Practice**

September 30, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Stephen Javorski **New Sneaker**

*Wapiti 2*

Wilderness therapy providers are often asked: (1) Can you keep your clients safe? (2) Does your program really work? (3) How can I identify exceptional programs? (4) Is your program worth the expense? Workshop participants will learn how current risk management analysis, outcomes research, and best practices produced by OBHIC and TAPG can address these questions, and explore implications of this information for policies, procedures, and negligence exposure within their own programs.

## **Poster Sessions**

Monday, September 30, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

*Explorers Room*

### **Backcountry Lightning Risk Management (National Weather Service Brochure)**

John Gookin

No place outdoors is safe from lightning. Lightning is an objective hazard. However, your behavior can reduce the risk of that hazard harming you. Learn about terrain safety hazards, ways to reduce lightning risk in the backcountry, how lightning hurts us, and first aid for lightning victims.

### **Incident Data Project**

Drew Leemon

This poster is an analysis of incident data that was submitted to the Adventure Program Incident Data Reporting Project and compiled for the WRMC in 2008. This is not a comprehensive research paper, but is simply a way to display the incident data that was voluntarily submitted by interested parties. The data are presented in tables and charts with only brief narrative discussion; the tables and charts should speak for themselves.

### **Virtual Risk Management: Using Online Training Modules to Increase Risk Awareness in University Faculty & Instructors**

Angie Moline

Many natural science faculty (e.g., geology, ecology) take students into a wilderness context on field trips but do not have adequate risk management training. This appears to be due to a lack of time for wilderness medical and management training rather than neglect. Angie has developed an online training module that walks faculty through field scenarios, medical issues, and planning considerations. This module is intended to cultivate risk awareness, not substitute for risk management training.

## **Coaching Sessions**

### **Monday & Tuesday, October 1–2, by appointment**

*Wrangler, Prospector, Homesteader*

A one-on-one coaching experience can lead to professional development or learning that can catapult a program forward. Focus time on a given question or get some coaching on how to implement change in your organization based on things that you have learned during the conference. Forty-minute coaching

sessions will be offered during WRMC workshops with a risk management or legal professional, or with professional development coach Sylvia Dresser.

## Structured Networking and Demonstrations

Tuesday, October 1, 4:45 – 6:00 p.m.

*Explorers Room*

Join your peers for some engaging and informal conversations and hear how like organizations manage similar challenges. We will provide topics and facilitate the formation of small discussion groups. The goal is to provide a venue for participants to connect with others who experience similar interests and to share ideas that will help attendees improve their programs.

Tuesday, October 1, 6:00 p.m.

*Explorers Room Patio*

Join John Gookin for a bear demonstration session that will include an electric fence used for food storage and hands-on practice using inert bear spray and a fake bear. We will work in teams of four so we practice the choreography a hiking team should use if they stumble upon a bear in the trail. These inert bear spray cans have been refilled with water: we will show you the plumbing apparatus used to refill the cans with air and water.

## Opening and Keynote Speakers

*Opening Address*

### **Education Without Experience: How Does it Work?**

Monday, September 30, 6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

John Gans

*Explorers Room*

Can you teach judgment and risk management lessons to others without relying on their mistakes as an experience base? The stakes are high when it comes to the wellbeing of people in wilderness settings, and we like to think that we can pass on wisdom without repeated serious results. John will discuss why some lessons stick while others do not, and how as an industry we can share our stories to help make every outdoor experience a better one.

*Keynote Address*

### **A Perspective on the Incredible Changes in Mountain Rescue**

Tuesday, October 1, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Renny Jackson

*Explorers Room*

Renny will discuss the evolution of Alpine Search and Rescue in Grand Teton and Denali National Parks – how it has changed, what is different, and how we try to manage the risk that is involved.

*Keynote Address*

### **Intelligent Mistakes: Why Smart People Do Stupid Things**

Wednesday, October 2, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Laurence Gonzales

*Explorers Room*

Based on the book *Deep Survival* this talk explores how the natural functioning of the brain, even when it's working normally, can lead us into systematic errors. These errors can be trivial (can't find my keys right under my nose) to fatal or near-fatal (falling off a cliff).

## Emergency Planning and Crisis Response

### Tuesday, October 1

#### **Core Workshop Crisis Management: A Pre-plan in Action**

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Drew Leemon

*Wapiti*

Responding to a crisis, such as a participant fatality, presents a complex situation that demands a thoughtful and reasoned response. This workshop will provide attendees with an overview of the five elements of successful crisis management. Begin to delve into the complexities of responding to crisis situations through the presenter's personal and professional experience. Drew will also provide a forum for exchanging ideas and sharing experiences of the audience. Additionally, this workshop will provide a starting point for creating a crisis management plan.

#### **New Topic This is Not JUST A Drill!**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Mark Vermeal

*Wapiti*

During this interactive lecture, participants will gain an understanding of the value of utilizing simulations to prepare administrative staff to effectively manage critical incidents. Participants will be taught a framework for conducting simulations that highlight strengths and expose gaps in their incident management. This session will discuss the benefits, relevant considerations, and potential pitfalls of conducting simulations. It will also provide participants with a continuum of simulation models that can target incident management goals.

#### **Core Workshop Risk Management: The Traumatic Aftermath**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Will Marling

*Wapiti*

This workshop is an introduction to processes and protocols for addressing the traumatic impact on clients, staff, and responders in the aftermath of a critical incident.

### Wednesday, October 2

#### **Core Workshop Crisis Communication in the Digital Age: The Basics Still Matter**

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Bruce Palmer

*Wapiti*

Learn from NOLS Marketing and Admissions Director

Bruce Palmer about how to monitor and utilize electronic communication, including the use of blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and other networks. Expect to walk away with an increased understanding of the basics of crisis communication and how to use the networks to their fullest potential.

**New Topic** **The Benefits of an External Risk**

**Management Review**

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

John Fair **New Speaker**

*Osprey*

In response to a critical incident, EPIC Adventures of Eastern Washington University implemented periodic external risk management reviews. This presentation will highlight the process of an external risk management review from inception to completion and will focus on the changes in culture and practices that were results of the process.

**Getting Beyond Operator Error:  
Using Systems to Analyze Accidents**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Jeff Jackson

*Grizzly*

The emerging systems-based approach to risk management planning has altered the way we conceive, organize, and implement risk systems. Many high-risk industries have incorporated systems-based risk management to analyze and understand accidents beyond the default causes of inherent risk and operator error. This workshop provides a systems approach to looking beyond operator error and understanding the latent and organizational causes of accidents. This analysis framework can be applied to critical and noncritical events and to different program or organizational structures.

**Performing Under Pressure**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Deb Ajango

*Grizzly*

This workshop will provide audience members with an understanding of how people tend to react, both cognitively and behaviorally, in stressful situations. Additionally, by using well-documented research and case studies, the presenter will explore factors that can influence one's response. The presenter will share ideas gathered during a pre-conference workshop and will offer suggestions on how one might modify his or her staff trainings and/or organizational emergency action plan so desired behaviors are more likely.

**Field Practices**

**Tuesday, October 1**

**Core Workshop** **Medical Topics: Old, New, & Controversial**

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

David Johnson, M.D.

*Grizzly*

This workshop will review some important old, new, and ongoing controversial/confusing medical topics relevant to work in remote areas. Come prepared to share your thoughts and ask questions.

**New Topic** **Managing Challenging Mental Health & Behavioral Issues in the Field**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Cynthia Stevens, M.D. **New Speaker**

*Antelope*

This workshop will focus on the practical understanding necessary to recognize and manage mental health and behavioral conditions in the field. Using her experience as the psychiatric and psychological consultant for NOLS, Cynthia will address common mental health disorders in prospective students, factors that may help identify at-risk students/applicants, psychotropic medications, adolescent behavior, and instructor responses to inappropriate behavior. Please bring experiences or vignettes to discuss.

**New Topic** **SAR Panel Discussion**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

John Gookin, Will Smith, M.D. **New Speaker**, and Will

White

Shana Tarter, facilitator

*Osprey*

Many outdoor programs rely on external emergency response systems as the backbone of their field emergency response plan. Do your instructors actually know what happens when they make that call, use their personal locator beacon, or set off an EPIRB? Do you? This panel discussion will gather together experts from the SAR community to offer their thoughts. In addition to questions crafted by the moderator, there will be opportunity for you to pose questions to the panelists about search and rescue operations and pre-planning.

**Wednesday, October 2**

**Core Workshop** **Accidents in Outdoor Pursuits:  
Assessment & Prevention Approaches**

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Jed Williamson

*Moose*

Accidents happen in outdoor pursuits and will continue to do so because risk is always involved. Learning how to try different approaches to prevent life-threatening or disabling injuries is a skill we all seek to hone. Through this workshop, participants will learn about how the categories in the Meyer/Williamson Accident Matrix can be used to allow both staff and participants to look at each activity and determine where potential problems might arise, to analyze incidents within their own program, and to consider other ways to design training that could reduce serious field incidents. This workshop is a combination of explaining the matrix, examining a few significant case studies, and small group discussion to share individual program concerns and how this instrument could be used as a risk analysis method.

**New Topic** **Risk Managing a Wilderness Fast: Why, When, and How to Facilitate a Fast in the Backcountry**

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Paul Stonehouse **New Speaker**

*Moose*

A wide variety of programs within outdoor adventure education (OAE) utilize fasting within their courses. Yet little within the OAE literature has been written on the fast. This is problematic, since the AEE's accreditation standards (7.06) require deliberate action with regard to fasting. Thus, this presentation addresses the purposes of a fast, ethical considerations for a fast, the physiology of wilderness fasting, risk management implications for backcountry fasting, and pedagogical strategies for a meaningful fast.

**New Topic** **'I'm Not Like the Others:' 3 Activities to Minimize the Emotional Risk of Exclusion**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Aparna Ragajopal-Durbin **New Speaker** and Pam Rosal

**New Speaker**

*Osprey*

We want our programs to reflect the diversity of the world around us, but are we ready to manage the emotional risks that come with this diversity? What other risk management issues arise or don't arise when we broaden our participant body? Along with diversity come varying expectations, abilities, needs, and perceptions. How can our programs provide an experience that best honors this diversity while maintaining positive outcomes? This workshop will help you train your staff to conduct three activities that set up an inclusive environment in your program.

**Bear Habitat Field Practices**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Katie Baum Mettenbrink

*Wapiti*

Traveling in either black or brown bear country is a unique opportunity and a complex risk management issue. Serious bear encounters in outdoor programs are rare, but potential consequences are severe and thoughtful practices around bear safety are essential. This workshop will touch on lessons learned at NOLS, outline the critical questions to be answered in critiquing your practices, and offer valuable tools for both teaching bear practices and making thoughtful decisions in the field.

**Legal Considerations**

**Tuesday, October 1**

**New Topic** **Employment, Staffing, Compensation & Other Legal Stuff**

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

James Pearson **New Speaker**

*Osprey*

This workshop will focus upon (1) employment issues such as interviewing, hiring, and terminating employees (2) classification

of employees versus independent contractors (3) wage and hour considerations, particularly for employees who are potentially on duty 24-7 (4) issues relating to volunteers and interns as opposed to paid staff and (5) selected OSHA issues.

**Core Workshop** **The Law Says 'Yes' to Risk**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Reb Gregg

*Osprey*

Over the past 20 years, the law has increasingly acknowledged the value of risk to personal development and a healthy society and accordingly has modified the duty of care owed in certain activities. We will examine this and other trends in those areas of law most fundamental to our operations: duty of care, defenses to claims of negligence (inherency and assumption of risks and releases of claims), protection from claims of minors, and statutes which immunize certain service providers.

**Managing Legal Issues After a Serious Incident: What to Do, What to Say**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Frances Mock

*Antelope*

Many organizations have considered the operational issues related to a serious incident. This presentation explores the legal issues. What evidence should you collect and how do you do that? What process should you use when taking witness statements? What should you know when dealing with land managers, state agencies, and law enforcement? How much of what you collect and record will be available to someone who sues you? This presentation answers these questions and provides tips on the legal issues related to a serious incident.

**Wednesday, October 2**

**Discovery & Depositions Can Be Fun**

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Wilma Gray

*Buffalo*

Discovery is the critical part of every civil lawsuit. We will cover how your program can assist attorneys to respond to written discovery, anticipate electronic discovery requests, and prepare for a deposition. Participants will be provided an opportunity to work on some sample written discovery responses using your own program experience. We will discuss the legal language used in the discovery in order to learn what is appropriate to be written and how that can be twisted/interpreted by lawyers on the other side. We will cover what "e-discovery" is and how to be prepared for invasive discovery requests for electronically stored documents. We will cover what a deposition is and the rules for depositions. Volunteers will be selected to test their abilities to answer deposition questions against skilled deposition takers. The audience will then discuss and critique both. Note: This session can be attended as a standalone or as a preview of what happens before trial and how to prepare for trial. It is intended to build up to Reb Gregg's and Catherine

Hansen-Stamps' *Mock Trial "My Feet are Cold"*.

### **'Standards in the Industry:' What Does this Phrase Really Mean & How do Standards Impact Your Programs & Practices?**

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Tracey Knutson

*Grizzly*

"Standards in the Recreation Industry" What does that mean and how does it affect your operation? In this session, we want to understand the meaning and scope of the oft-used phrase "standards in the industry." We know that "standards of care" are used in judging liabilities and that standards of care are often derived from "standards of practice," but do you understand these phrases and how they affect your business? Operators and administrators are constantly making decisions on perceived or so-called "standards" in the recreation industry—but how supportable are these standards and the decisions that derive from them? We'll start with a broad idea of what a "standard" is and work our way down to specific examples of standards and how they affect your practices, your liabilities, and the implementation of your risk-management processes. We'll look at who is promulgating standards, why, the legal impacts of standards, and whether the standards are local, regional, or national. We want to understand whether standards are weapons that can be used against you or shields that can save you and how/why you need to incorporate them into your risk management planning. At this critical time in the recreation industry where the tension between business sustainability and potential liabilities can be the deciding factor in a business's health or demise, operators and administrators need to be conversant in and aware of how standards impact the industry.

### **'My Feet are Cold' Mock Trial**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Reb Gregg and Catherine Hansen-Stamp

Witnesses: Molly Hampton, Tod Schimelpfenig, Jed Williamson

*Wapiti*

The Sedro Woolley Players (Tod Schimelpfenig as staff, Molly Hampton as student, and Jed Williamson as expert) return with their 1994 WRMC conference courtroom drama of a summer backpacking course gone wobbly when it encounters a snowstorm. Frostbite provokes a lawsuit and issues of disclosure, staff training and competencies, medical treatment, and emergency procedures. Reb and Catherine will examine these witnesses and lead a discussion of the issues.

### **Core Workshop Participant Agreement: Is it Really Better than the Paper it's Written on?**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Tony Clapp

*Osprey*

Is the participant agreement worth the paper that it is written on? Oftentimes participants sign a waiver and release—also known as a participant agreement—believing it is merely a formality before being allowed to participate in the program/activity. Participant agreements are generally the first line of

defense in a claim and are likely one of the most important documents that governs the relationship between the participant and the program. Learn what creates an effective release and how releases are treated by the courts. We will utilize decisions from actual reported cases for the analysis.

## **Program Administration**

### **Tuesday, October 1**

#### **New Topic Adapt-Ability: Working with People with Disabilities in an Adventure Setting**

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Becky Van Horsen **New Speaker**, Eric Bonin **New Speaker**, and Janine Donald **New Speaker**

*Moose*

People with disabilities are the fastest growing group in the U.S. today. The outdoor industry must understand how to serve this population in order to meet the needs of future clients. Our presentation will include a short disability awareness training and a discussion about how you can use creativity to make your programs accessible and then delve into the barriers that people with disabilities and outfitters face when attempting to join/create adaptive adventure trips.

#### **New Topic Bloodborne & Other Pathogens in the Backcountry**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Steve Neal and David Johnson, M.D.

*Buffalo*

Many outdoor adventure field staff, as a condition of employment, are expected to perform as medical first responders in the event of a medical emergency. These employees should be considered at risk for an "occupational exposure" to bodily fluids. This session looks at the Center for Disease Control guidelines and OSHA Standards related to occupational exposures. We will explore the importance of understanding the employer's responsibilities related to exposure control practices, including having clear post-exposure follow-up planning, training, and field protocols. We will also examine respiratory and contact exposures and vector-borne illnesses and diseases that may threaten both staff and students. Participants in this session will leave with information, tools, and templates to assist in understanding and implementing effective exposure control planning and practices.

#### **New Topic Contracting with Third Parties**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Catherine Hansen-Stamp, Todd Duncan **New Speaker**, and Justin Talbot

*Buffalo*

In this session, we will approach contracting with outside organizations from both a legal and program perspective. We will highlight, among other things, how screening, clarifying respective responsibilities and liabilities in a written contract, informed negotiation, and importantly, staff "role" training drive more thoughtful and intentional relationships with partners and

contractors. Arrangements discussed include an organization subcontracting a portion of programming, teaming up on a mutual services arrangement, and facilities use or rental. Attendees will also engage with an interactive case study.

## Wednesday, October 2

### **New Topic** Mission Creep: When the Tail Wags the Dog

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Steve Smith

*Osprey*

Is your program's mission clearly identified, understood, and referred to by staff at all levels? Does your field staff know and understand your mission more than the people designing programs, writing grants, or sitting on the board? When a new program model is identified, is there a clear process by which that model is vetted against existing mission, safety, and training filters? This presentation will explore the common risk management challenges programs face to innovate new programs without drifting away from their mission.

### **New Topic** Social Media's Heuristic Trap & the Role of Digital Immigrants in Teaching Risk Management to Digital Natives

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Jerry Isaak

*Wapiti*

The current generation (Millennial—born between 1982 and 2001) of outdoor adventure/education students is different than any previous generation because of the influence of digital and online media. The rise of online communities and social identity, combined with the proliferation of new technology such as helmet cams and live Twitter feeds, appears to require a shift in the way outdoor educators approach the instruction of risk management and decision making. This workshop will attempt to clearly define the influence of social media and technology on risk taking/decision making and will seek solutions to the challenge of a possible digital divide between digital natives (students) and immigrants (instructors).

### What You Need to Know when Applying for or Renewing Insurance

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Donald Pachner **New Speaker**

*Buffalo*

A sophisticated, practical guide to the legal and risk management considerations involved in assessing insurance needs, selecting an insurance agent, obtaining insurance proposals for new insurance programs or insurance renewals, and finalizing an insurance program, this workshop, for new and experienced program managers and administrators, includes an overview of current trends and common problematic insurance issues that arise after a policy is issued. It is geared to both for-profit and nonprofit outdoor recreation, outdoor education, and social service organizations.

### How Managing Risk for Military Veterans will Improve

### Your Whole Program

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Stacy Bare, Kevin Heiner, and Jarrod Ball

*Buffalo*

Over 2 million veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan are back in the U.S.; many have the skills, leadership, and work ethic you want in your programs. Learn how preparing a risk management plan that incorporates dealing with common veteran issues like traumatic brain injury, post traumatic stress, physical adaptation, and lowered aversion to risk will improve your entire program.

## Staff Training & Decision Making

## Tuesday, October 1

### **Core Workshop** Training to Failure and Other Unlikely and Highly Effective Training Strategies

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Jeff Jackson

*Antelope*

The realities of accelerated timelines and compressed training requires turning traditional staff training on its head. A focus on non-normal, training to failure, testing, and sensemaking are uncommon, unlikely, and proven effective in building competency fast. This workshop is based on last year's "Accelerated Training" but focuses on applying a-typical training strategies.

### **New Topic** Central Gulley Avalanche, a Case Study: How Good Intentions Slide You Straight To Hell

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Thom Pollard **New Speaker** and Will White

*Grizzly*

On January 17, 2013, on Mount Washington in New Hampshire there was an avalanche that involved a group of 12 climbers, one of whom was the Emmy winning filmmaker Thom Pollard. The climbers were doing a fundraising climb. What were the individual and team decisions that led to this incident? This will be an interactive presentation that will include film of the climb as well as leadership and decision analysis.

### **Core Workshop** Where Are We Now? 20 Years of Decision Making

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Brendan Madden and Tod Schimelpfenig

*Grizzly*

Risk management is dependent upon real people making decisions in real time. Our understanding of human decision making, and how administrators can influence it, has changed dramatically in the last 20 years. This presentation will explore the lessons learned over the lifespan of the WRMC and examine the state-of-the-art in the application of decision-making theory. We will show how to use an understanding of judgment and decision making to make vital improvements in the staff-training, mentoring, and debriefing components of your risk management system.

## Wednesday, October 2

### Stupidity Explored: Mindful Leadership Amplified

8:30 – 10 a.m.

Lester Zook

*Grizzly*

“Idiots!” Many, no doubt, have drawn this conclusion after seeing some disaster story or insane YouTube video. But what is stupidity? What does research say about stupid behavior? Can it be predicted beforehand and thus maybe prevented? How might practicing mindful leadership help us to know stupid when we see it and possibly avoid it? How does mindful leadership synthesize with our understandings of experiential learning? This workshop will explore these questions through content presentation, story-telling, group-sharing, and fashioning of personal and programmatic applications.

### **New Topic** Keeping Field Staff Fresh: A Model for Ongoing Training

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Rebecca Bear and Jeremy Oyen

*Antelope*

Training part-time and seasonal staff can pose a challenge to the ongoing program and risk management needs of your organization. REI Outdoor School will share techniques from their training program, utilizing a variety of field, online, self-study, and mentorship to enhance the culture of risk management and the comfort level for field and administrative staff. Come prepared to share your creative tools for non field-based training opportunities.

### **New Topic** Decision Making: Errors of Perception

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Gates Richards

*Antelope*

In this session, we will explore the neurobiological factors of perception that contribute to human errors in decision-making. Using video, activities, and magic, we will experience and discuss errors of attention, errors of pattern recognition, and priming errors. Though we cannot eliminate these hazards from our decision-making process, we can recognize their effects, account for their presence, and minimize the chances of significant fallout from the traps they set. By increasing our awareness of how the brain processes information, we can take steps toward being more deliberate in our decision-making awareness and perhaps make more consistently good decisions.

### Three Plug and Play Staff Training Activities

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Shana Tarter

*Antelope*

This workshop will provide you with three staff training activities you can utilize during annual staff trainings, periodic staff meetings, or potentially during course briefings. The activities will focus on values clarification, change blindness, and reverse planning from the risk management perspective. Each activity is designed to take approximately 30–45 minutes and each is independent of the others. In addition to describing

and/or demonstrating the activities, we will review tips on effective activity facilitation.

## Sector Specific Issues and Repeat Presentations

## Tuesday, October 1

### **New Topic** Incident Trends in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare: What Do They Mean to Me?

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Stephen Javorski **New Speaker**

*Buffalo*

This workshop will present incident, illness, runaway, and physical restraint rate trends in OBHIC member programs since 2001; outline relationships between events and time of day, activity, weather, and time in program; contextualize OBH incident trends in comparison to in-patient and similar recreational activities; and introduce OBHIC's online data collection project. Participants will explore how this knowledge can inform their practice as a front line staff, program manager, or private practitioner of through experientials.

### **Core Workshop** Higher Expectations: The Professionalizing of International Trip Leading

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Bill Frederick

*Moose*

The bar has been raised on professional expectations of programs taking students abroad. This presentation will review what we need to be able to do and the skills, understanding, and information access that we need in order to do it. Emphasis will be on designing institutional strategy for info acquisition, communications, training staff & students in non-specific problem solving, utilizing destination resources as well as home institution infrastructure.

### Chance and Randomness: The Complications of Managing Incidents Overseas

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Gennifer Hartman, Aaron Slosberg **New Speaker**,

and Jennifer Royall

*Moose*

Program variables change significantly in international settings, as does emergency pre-planning, incident management, or crisis response. Limited or undeveloped medical resources, unreliable communication, and transportation present programmatic challenges requiring development of best practices in risk management. Using international case studies, we will analyze real scenarios to help your program understand and manage field incidents overseas. From the Amazon rainforest to the Himalaya, educate your program about international risks and rewards.

## Wednesday, October 2

### **Core Workshop** Training to Failure and Other Unlikely and Highly Effective Training Strategies

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Jeff Jackson

*Antelope*

The realities of accelerated timelines and compressed training requires turning traditional staff training on its head. A focus on non-normal, training to failure, testing, and sensemaking are uncommon, unlikely, and proven effective in building competency fast. This workshop is based on last year's "Accelerated Training" but focuses on applying a-typical training strategies.

**New Topic** **College, University, and Municipality Risk Management Today**

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Jeanette Stawski **New Speaker**, Tim Moore **New Speaker**

*Buffalo*

The profession of outdoor recreation and education is rapidly changing and it is an exciting time to be involved as a professional working in this industry. Our industry continues to grow and change norms of being and furthering what it means to be an expert. In this session, we will engage in a dialogue regarding the industry of outdoor recreation and education related to colleges, university, and municipalities utilizing current information, insight, and action steps.

**Core Workshop** **Crisis Management: A Pre-plan in Action**

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Drew Leemon

*Moose*

Responding to a crisis, such as a participant fatality, presents a complex situation that demands a thoughtful and reasoned response. This workshop will provide attendees with an overview of the five elements of successful crisis management. Begin to delve into the complexities of responding to crisis situations through the presenter's personal and professional experience. Drew will also provide a forum for exchanging ideas and sharing experiences of the audience. Additionally, this workshop will provide a starting point for creating a crisis management plan.

**Core Workshop** **Where Are We Now? 20 Years of Decision Making**

3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Brendan Madden and Tod Schimelpfenig

*Moose*

Risk management is dependent upon real people making decisions in real time. Our understanding of human decision making, and how administrators can influence it, has changed dramatically in the last 20 years. This presentation will explore the lessons learned over the lifespan of the WRMC and examine the state-of-the-art in the application of decision-making theory. We will show how to use an understanding of judgment and decision making to make vital improvements in the staff-training, mentoring, and debriefing components of your risk management system.



## Speaker Biographies

**Deb Ajango** has presented nationally and internationally on the topic of risk management, emergency action planning, and wilderness medicine for nearly 20 years. In addition to presenting at the WRMC, she has presented at a variety of conferences on the topics of risk management, emergency action planning, medical screening, and med-legal. Deb currently serves on the risk management committee for SCA, is on the board of Alaska State Parks, and is on the steering committee for travel abroad. Deb has a Master's degree in clinical psychology and has been an instructor for Wilderness Medical Associates for more than 20 years.

**Jarrold Ball** is the Northwest and Alaska regional program director for the SCA's young adult programs. He has led youth and adult trails teams, instructed trails maintenance and construction, and spent winters working as a professional ski patroller. Prior to his move to the outdoor industry, Jarrold evaluated and mitigated risk as a small business owner, manager, and officer of a title insurance agency. An Idaho native, he can now be found skiing, climbing, and generally recreating with his family outside of Seattle, Wash.

**Stacy Bare** is a climber, mountaineer, and skier. He deployed to Iraq 2006-2007 as an Army captain and received a Bronze Star for Merit. Outdoor activity helped him overcome challenges associated with post-traumatic stress and reintegration anxiety. He is a proud graduate of the University of Mississippi and received a graduate degree in city planning from the University of Pennsylvania. He co-founded Veterans Expeditions in 2010 and now serves as the director of Sierra Club's Mission Outdoors.

**Katie Baum Mettenbrink** brings 10 years of experience as a program administrator and field instructor at NOLS. She is the staffing coordinator at NOLS Professional Training, a senior NOLS field instructor, and also works as a consultant and administrator at NOLS Risk Management Services. Before coming to NOLS Professional Training, she supervised faculty and risk management as the program manager at NOLS Alaska and accumulated over 120 weeks of field experience on extended wilderness expeditions.

**Rebecca Bear** currently works as REI Outdoor Programs and Outreach manager overseeing REI's education programs both in-store and in the field. She directs the instructor training program and supports REI's risk management committee. Prior to working at REI, Rebecca served as the chair of risk management committee for Passages Northwest and worked with Outward Bound International. Rebecca has a Master's from Harvard University and a certificate in sustainable business from Bainbridge Graduate Institute.

**KC Bess** has been having a great time on rivers for the past 12 years. From rafting in the U.S., Canada, and New Zealand, he has gained a great appreciation for the power and risks involved

in spending time around moving water. As an instructor for Rescue 3 International, KC has worked with professional river guides, firefighters, para rescuers, Coast Guard rescue swimmers, and Navy SEALs.

**Eric Bonin** has been working to create amazing outdoor adventures for people of all ability levels for over 15 years. Currently, he is managing a year-round program for Splore, a nonprofit which provides whitewater rafting, rock climbing, canoeing, and winter sports for people with disabilities and disadvantages. Eric has had the privilege of sharing the Wasatch, Adirondacks, Green, and other parts of the Appalachian Mountains with people who have visual, physical, emotional, developmental, and hearing impairments.

**Tony Clapp** was born and raised in Colorado and has practiced law there since 1996. Prior to practicing law, he was a fly fishing and whitewater rafting guide. Tony also taught skiing at the National Sports Center for the Disabled. He is a current member of the Winter Park Ski and Ride School and the executive director of CatSki U.S., a not-for-profit trade association serving backcountry snowcat tour operators in the United States.

**Janine Donald** is the executive director of Splore, a Utah-based nonprofit that provides outdoor adventures to people with disabilities and disadvantages. Janine's career in the outdoors started with a life-changing semester with SCA in Canyonlands National Park. From there, she worked for a wilderness therapy company for a few years, spent a season as an outdoor education instructor in California, and then joined Splore in 2007.

**Sylvia Dresser** has worked in experiential education for over 20 years, as a school librarian, trainer for Project Adventure, and executive director of the Association for Challenge Course Technology. In all of these and other roles, she has provided informal coaching to others. In 2010, she started her business, Third Season Consulting, providing coaching and consulting services. Sylvia is certified as a leadership coach.

**Todd Duncan** has managed and directed adventure, research, and education programs on five continents. He specializes in developing new programs and has been creating and running programs in Hawaii and Belize for 10 years, where he also served with the Wildlife Conservation Society as manager for Glover's Reef Marine Research Station. After two years as the director of Safety and Student Life for the School for Field Studies (SFS), Todd now helps administer operations as program safety manager for the Sierra Club.

**John Fair** has 15 years experience as a course instructor, instructor trainer, and program administrator. He has a master's in education with an outdoor education emphasis and is the director

of EPIC Adventures at Eastern Washington University. John is an independent risk management consultant, an instructor with Wilderness Medicine Training Center, and a course provider for the Professional Climbing Instructors Association.

**Bill Frederick** is the founder of Lodestone Safety International, a training and consulting company specializing in health, safety, and security for educational organizations operating abroad. Prior to that, he served at the School for Field Studies for eight years and Outward Bound for 16 years. He is a faculty committee member for Wilderness Medical Associates. He holds a master's in education from Harvard University and a CTH from the International Society of Travel Medicine.

**John Gans** graduated magna cum laude from St. John's University in Collegeville, where he received a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a minor in physics. He began his career with NOLS as an instructor in 1981 and was named director of NOLS Alaska in 1984 and director of operations in 1990. In 1995 he was selected executive director of NOLS, where he is responsible for overall strategic planning, mission leadership, and building an institutional community and commitment with 1,200 faculty and staff members. Prior to coming to NOLS, John worked with colleagues to found an experiential secondary school in New Hampshire where he developed the math and science curriculum and created their outdoor program.

**Laurence Gonzales** was born in St. Louis, Mo. and grew up in Houston and San Antonio, Texas. He is the author of the bestseller *Deep Survival: Who Lives, Who Dies, and Why* and the sequel, *Surviving Survival: The Art and Science of Resilience*. Laurence has won many awards, including two National Magazine Awards and the Distinguished Service Award from the Society of Professional Journalists. He has appeared as a speaker before groups ranging from the Santa Fe Institute to Legg Mason Capital Management, the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is now at work on a nonfiction book about the crash of United Flight 232 at Sioux City, Iowa, July 19, 1989. It will be published by W.W. Norton in the spring of 2014.

**John Gookin, Ph.D.** has worked in search and rescue for over 40 years. He has been on hundreds of missions as a deputy coroner, special deputy sheriff, and SAR commander in Fremont County, Wyo. He wrote the National Weather Service brochure "Back-country Lightning Risk Management" and the book *NOLS Bear Essentials*. John is the NOLS Curriculum and Research manager.

**Wilma Gray**, born in Ontario, Canada, received her bachelor's degree from Queen's University in 1984 and J.D. from New College of California in 1996. Wilma has been practicing law since being admitted to the California Bar in 1997, joined McNamara Law Firm in California 1998, and became a partner in 2005. Wilma is a member of the State Bar of California, the American Board of Trial Advocates, the American Bar Association, the Contra Costa County Bar Association, and the Association of Defense Counsel of Northern California. When

not working in trial or deposition, she loves to get outdoors to enjoy hiking, canoeing, biking, skiing (cross-country and downhill), and snowshoeing. She spends her winter recreation time volunteering at the Disabled Sports USA Ski School at Alpine Meadows at Lake Tahoe.

**Reb Gregg** is a Houston, Texas attorney specializing in outdoor adventure and education law. He is a member of the WRMC Steering Committee, the Accreditation Council of the Association for Experiential Education, the Board of the Independent Schools Experiential Education Network, and the Risk Management Committee of Outward Bound International. Reb serves as legal counsel to the Association for Challenge Course Technology and to a number of adventure programs including summer camps, college and secondary school outdoor programs, challenge course, and zip line operators and builders. He is a frequent lecturer and writer and honoree of the Charles (Reb) Gregg Award, established by the Wilderness Risk Management Conference in 2009.

**Catherine Hansen-Stamp** is an attorney in Golden, Colo. She advises recreation and adventure providers on law, liability, and risk management issues. She speaks and writes on these issues both regionally and nationally, and has presented at the WRMC since its inception in 1994. Cathy provides legal counsel to a variety of organizations, including recreation, adventure and sport program providers, camps, schools, outfitters, and guides. She is a member of the Wyoming and Colorado Bar Associations and co-authors for ACA Campline and the Outdoor and Recreation Adventure Law Center with Reb Gregg.

**Gennifer Hartman** is a visionary who has spent the past decade redefining experiential education and what can be accomplished academically by making the world a classroom. As principal and founder of The Traveling School, she began leading student expeditions to exotic and unpredictable destinations in 1996. She has traveled extensively with teenagers through the Himalayas, along the Indian Ocean, and within the Amazon rainforest—devoting her life to teaching students about outdoor adventures and foreign travel.

**Kevin Heiner** is an avid adventurer, conservationist, and outdoor leader. He believes in providing opportunities to people from all walks of life to become connected to the outdoors and to create future stewards of those touched by the outdoors. Kevin is currently the program director for the Southwest Conservation Corps where he directs youth, young adult, and veterans programs in Durango, Colo. He also served as a firefighter in the U.S. Air Force and has bachelor's degrees from Western State College in business and recreation.

**Jerry Isaak** is the outdoor program coordinator and an adjunct instructor of physical education and sport at Eastern Oregon University. He received an MSc in outdoor education while studying as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar at the University of Edinburgh and has worked as an expedition leader and guide in Canada, the U.S., Morocco, Scotland, Austria, and the Arctic.

**Jeff Jackson** is an award-winning educator who brings a business management perspective that spans adventure tourism, economic development, health care, and education. Jeff is a professor and coordinator of Algonquin College in the Ottawa Valley's Outdoor Adventure professional guide training diploma, where he oversees 18,000 student field days per year and teaches courses in leadership, ethics, marketing, risk management, and business planning. He is co-author of the widely adopted textbook *Managing Risk: Systems Planning for Outdoor Adventure Programs*.

**Renny Jackson** has been climbing for 40 years, 34 of which he served as National Park Service climbing ranger and mountain rescue and helicopter short-haul rescue specialist in Grand Teton and Denali National Parks. He is a recipient of three Department of the Interior Valor Awards and co-authored *A Climbers' Guide to the Teton Range*. Renny's extensive climbing and alpine experience includes six Himalayan expeditions including two to Mt. Everest, the first ascent of the North Face of Cholatse, and an ascent of the southwest ridge of Ama Dablam. He was an instructor at the Khumbu climbing Center in Nepal in 2009 and 2012 and a ski patrolman at Jackson Hole Mountain Resort for 10 years.

**Stephen Javorski** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Outdoor Experiential Education program at University of New Hampshire and holds a master's in wilderness therapy from Naropa University. He has over 15 years of experience as a field instructor, program director, facilitator, and wilderness therapist. He currently studies incident and clinical outcome trends in NATSAP and OBHIC programs, teaches in the Outdoor Education and Social Work departments at UNH, and is on the TAPG leadership council.

**David Johnson, M.D.** is a practicing emergency physician with nearly 35 years of clinical practice. He has been a medical consultant, educator, and lecturer for a variety of outdoor educational and service organizations throughout North America and abroad.

**Tracey Knutson** is a licensed attorney whose primary practice involves working with recreation and adventure sports commercial operators, public land administrators and recreation oriented educational groups. An experienced trial lawyer, Tracey defends recreation companies and sports groups from liability claims, often negotiating pretrial conclusions that minimize time and expense. In addition, she provides risk management and training services. Tracey's belief, when it comes to recreational endeavors, is that risk and opportunity exist simultaneously. Learning how to maximize the opportunities in your recreational endeavors by minimizing or mitigating the risks is a key component of operating a quality adventure sport or recreational endeavor or business.

**Alex Kosseff** is the director of the Outdoor Safety Institute and author of the *AMC Guide to Outdoor Leadership*. He has assisted over 50 outdoor education, recreation, and conservation programs in improving their risk management practices. In his former role with the Appalachian Mountain Club, Alex developed risk management systems covering 9,000 annual

volunteer and professionally led outdoor programs. He lives in Bozeman, Mont. and enjoys climbing, skiing, paddling, and exploring the Yellowstone ecosystem and beyond.

**Drew Leemon**, director of risk management at NOLS, began his career in outdoor education in 1979 and has held his current position since 1996. He is a past chairman of the Wilderness Risk Managers Committee and is on the steering committee for the Wilderness Risk Management Conference. He has published papers on wilderness injury and incident data and is co-editor of the *Manual of Accreditation Standards for Adventure Programming* and co-authored *Risk Management for Outdoor Leaders*.

**Erica Linnell** is a senior instructor and lead WEMT educator for the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute. Erica worked as a guide, outdoor educator, and NOLS field instructor for 10 years in mountaineering, backcountry skiing, and backpacking throughout the western U.S. and Alaska. In 2003 an injury sidelined her from big expeditions and she became a NOLS program supervisor and the Women's Initiative coordinator where she mentored faculty and supervised field risk management. At the same time she began her work as an urban EMT and ski patroller. While she loved working as an emergency care provider, she missed teaching and thus came to WMI to combine her background in mountain travel, education, and medicine. She currently lives in the Teton Valley with her husband AJ and their dog Rue where she leads WMI courses and trains telemark ski instructors.

**Melanie Mac Innis** is the Sierra Club Outdoors assistant director for volunteer engagement. Melanie supports and trains volunteers to lead in the outdoors for the Sierra Club. She leads day hikes, backpacking, and river rafting trips as a volunteer and as a commercial guide. She's an open water swimmer, a whitewater guide instructor, and a first aid and CPR instructor. Melanie's undergraduate and master's degrees are in the humanities from San Francisco State University.

**Brendan Madden** is the Rocky Mountain program director and national safety chair for Outward Bound Canada, previously director of Hulbert Outdoor Center in Vermont. He has spent most of the last two decades as a senior instructor and program director at both NOLS and Outward Bound.

**Will Marling** earned his undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate degrees in a variety of disciplines. In 2000 he was trained by the National Organization for Victim Assistance® (NOVA) and added to his skill set and experience base in responding to people in crisis. His praxis has been informed as a responder to a variety of national and international events from violent crimes to natural disasters. Will was appointed to executive director for NOVA in July 2007.

**Frances Mock** is an attorney specializing in advising outdoor education and recreation programs. She is counsel to NOLS, Outward Bound, and other clients providing advice about responding to serious incidents, claims, and lawsuits, as well as other matters such as ADA compliance, liability release forms,

contracts, and general risk management. Frances worked as a Class V whitewater rafting guide, cross country skiing instructor for special needs populations, and in other adventure-based industries for 10 years before becoming an attorney.

**Angie Moline, Ph.D.**, teaches environmental science courses on the Colorado Plateau, often hours from definitive care. She directs the Summer Conservation Experience and Grand Canyon semester at Northern Arizona University. She is an aquatic ecologist whose research focuses on the conservation and management of desert streams and springs. Angie has taught field-based courses across the western U.S. and Mexico for NAU, the Wild Rockies Field Institute, the Audubon Expedition Institute, Prescott College, and Outward Bound.

**Timothy J. Moore** serves as the director of Recreational Sports at Boston University. Previously, Timothy served as the director of recreational sports and director of the Outdoor Pursuit Center at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Miami University (Ohio), assistant director of the outdoor program at Illinois State University, and as a consultant for projects involving collegiate and community recreation facility and program design, leadership, and organizational development. Timothy completed his bachelor's degree in leisure studies and master's in education at Iowa State University. He has served as an adjunct instructor in the Miami University Teacher Education Department and as an instructor of outdoor recreation and leadership development for the physical education program and Sloan School of Business at MIT. Timothy has also authored several articles and is currently working on a textbook chapter in the area of outdoor recreation and education program administration. He is a past president and founder of the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE) and is a professional member of the National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA). Tim is active in environmental projects in his community and enjoys sailing, hiking, and fitness activities.

**Jaime Musnicki** has been working in outdoor education since 2000, spending the last 10 years in various positions with NOLS. She has accumulated over 225 field weeks for NOLS teaching mountaineering, backcountry skiing, hiking, and rock climbing courses. Additionally, Jaime has spent the past four winter seasons helping to run the NOLS winter program out of Teton Valley, Idaho. She has also filled various other NOLS program-related roles in Alaska, Wyoming, the Pacific Northwest, and India. Jaime recently accepted a half-time position as the executive director of the American Avalanche Association and plans to continue her NOLS field work in conjunction with this new professional role. She lives in Victor, Idaho and enjoys exploring the surrounding mountains during all seasons, especially winter.

**Steve Neal**, risk management officer for Outward Bound USA since 2007, has been a risk management and safety professional for 37 years. After an early career as a paramedic, he developed a keen understanding of the importance of proactive loss prevention. His career spans his current position with Outward Bound; nine years as risk manager for the City of Portland, Maine; 20 years in the ski industry focusing on insurance,

safety, and risk management; and six years as a licensed insurance professional providing loss control and claim services to the outdoor recreation industry. A native Mainer or "Maniac," Steve enjoys sailing, biking, skiing, and all the outdoor activities New England has to offer.

**Paul Nicolazzo** is a professional in the outdoor field with over 35 years experience leading trips, training staff, and designing and managing outdoor programs. His professional writing includes the *Art & Technique of Wilderness Medicine*, *Case Studies in Wilderness Medicine*, the *Wilderness Medicine Handbook*, *Effective Outdoor Program Design & Management*, the *Site Management Handbook* and numerous articles. He has extensive technical and field expertise in general mountaineering, ski mountaineering, rock climbing, canyoneering, and all inland whitewater and expedition paddle and rowing sports. He is the director and president of the Wilderness Medicine Training Center Inc. and lives in Mazama, Wash. with his wife and son.

**Jeremy Oyen** has worked in the outdoor education industry for 25+ years at the local, regional, and national level. He is the current Curriculum and Training coordinator for REI Outdoor Programs and Outreach and is responsible for alignment and development of the REI Outdoor School National Program curriculum including classroom and field programs. He joined the REI team in April 2011 after working for the American Canoe Association and Cleveland Metroparks Institute of the Great Outdoors.

**Donald Pachner** worked at a respected international brokerage firm for 25 years before turning his outdoors and environmental volunteer work into a business 10 years ago. His growing insurance brokerage firm Pachner & Associates specializes in insurance for outdoor recreation, outdoor and nature education, environmental conservation and research organizations, trail associations, and outdoor clubs around the U.S. He has authored articles for the American Mountain Guides Association Mountain Bulletin and American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education Instructor Newsletter and teaches AMGA professional development courses for mountaineering guides and guide services. Outside of work, he volunteers with Sierra Club, Audubon, and other outdoor and conservation organizations.

**Bruce Palmer** is NOLS' admission and marketing director, a position he has held since 1990. During his tenure, NOLS enrollment has grown from 2,500 to more than 17,000 students annually. As NOLS' primary media coordinator and spokesperson, Bruce has handled communications with written, radio, and television press on positive stories and in times of crisis. Web, blog, and social media are all employed by NOLS as part of its crisis communications arsenal.

**James Pearson** has 30 years' experience in business law, business management, and consulting. He has received a Martindale-Hubbell top AV rating for attorneys and is president of Pearson & Paris, P.C., a prestigious Denver, Colo. law firm which emphasizes commercial transactions and litigation, real estate, insurance, and recreation law. James has an extensive background in business transactions and litigation and he

routinely advises on matters related to both. He founded the RiverReach Youth Initiative (now known as cityWILD), an organization that helps young people gain a sense of responsibility to their community and environment, rewarding participating youth with recreational outings. He holds bachelor's and Juris Doctorate degrees and lectures frequently in the areas of business and related liability issues including recreational liability. He is also a past contributing editor for *Adventure Travel Business Magazine* and *American Bicyclist*.

**Thom Pollard** is an award-winning director of photography, producer, editor, and still photographer who has worked extensively both domestically and around the globe. He has filmed in the most extreme situations, from the death zone on Mount Everest to the re-creation of an ancient reed ship voyage from Chile to Easter Island. Thom is also a successful public speaker, translating his adventure and filmmaking experiences into inspiring visual presentations for audiences across the United States. He is a member of The Explorers Club and the American Alpine Club.

**Aparna Rajagopal-Durbin** is a field instructor, blogger, and diversity and inclusion (D&I) manager at NOLS, where she has facilitated numerous workshops aimed at helping field instructors and staff members foster a more inclusive environment.

**Gates Richards** is a senior instructor for the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute. Gates has been involved in outdoor education and EMS since the early '90s. Over the years, he's worked outdoor programming throughout the Rocky Mountains, Pacific Northwest, and Alaska. He's worked urban EMS in Washington, D.C.; Seattle, Wash.; Gunnison County, Colo.; and is an Intermediate EMT in Lander, Wyo. Gates began teaching for WMI in 1998 and now bears the title of WMI special programs manager. He oversees WMI's Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician (WEMT) and Instructor Training programs and is a Fellow of the Academy of Wilderness Medicine.

**Pam Rosal** is assistant manager of the NOLS Rocky Mountain River Program. Her personal mission inspires her to use relationship and conversation to build space for people to grow. Tools for the journey include resilience principles, vulnerability, building relationship skills into coachable progressions, emotional courage, and a willingness to experiment.

**Jennifer Royall** is a nationally certified educator who spent over 15 years in the classroom. With a master's in education from Lesley College and a bachelor's from Duke University, Jennifer first learned the importance of incorporating outdoor education, community service, and a rigorous academic curriculum at the Chadwick School in Palos Verdes, Calif. Today, as The Traveling School's program and curriculum director, Jennifer directly oversees semester programs in both Latin America and southern Africa.

**Jay Satz** is the Northwest Regional vice president at SCA, where he serves as a senior risk management advisor. He joined SCA 25 years ago leading a conservation crew of teens and recent immigrants to the Seattle area. He has served as pro-

gram manager, traditional skills instructor, and vice president of program and safety for SCA. As a member of the WRMC steering committee since 1995, Jay is committed to building a community of dedicated professionals to support each other in our important work.

**Tod Schimelpfenig** has been a NOLS instructor since 1973. He is a volunteer Search and Rescue Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician (WEMT) and is currently the curriculum director of NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute. Tod was the NOLS risk management director for eight years and the NOLS Rocky Mountain School director for six years. He served on the board of the Wilderness Medical Society for three years and founded the Wilderness Risk Manager's Committee. Tod authored NOLS Wilderness Medicine and co-authored Risk Management for Outdoor Leaders. He was the recipient of the 2010 Charles (Reb) Gregg Wilderness Risk Management Award.

**Aaron Slosberg's** love for travel and adventure has brought him to over 25 countries around the globe. His passion for Latin America has repeatedly called him back to the region as a teacher, volunteer, guide, and traveler. After spending half a year working and volunteering in Guatemala in 2007, Aaron found the perfect vehicle for sharing his eclectic global interests through *Where There Be Dragons*; he has been fueled by the inspiring people and places encountered along the Dragons' path ever since. Aaron was awarded a foreign language and area studies fellowship to support his study of Indonesian language and history. Aaron is a Wilderness First Responder, avid surfer, and strong believer in the transformational power of travel.

**Steve Smith**, WRMC Steering Committee member, has greatly enjoyed (and grown from) his association with all three of the WRMC's sponsoring organizations. He is the national director of risk management for the SCA, providing risk management tools and resources for students and staff in all 50 states. A two-time NOLS alumnus, he has also served over 15 years at Outward Bound as a mountaineering instructor, staff trainer, staffing manager, and board member. While at Outward Bound, Steve hired and trained hundreds of staff and wrote sections of Outward Bound's Trainer's Manual and Instructor Manual. As a consultant and employee, he helps outdoor programs identify the relationship between their mission and their organizational risk tolerance—and uses trainings, policies, and systems to align operations to that risk tolerance. Based out of Seattle, he routinely finds humility climbing in the North Cascades.

**Will Smith, M.D.**, is an emergency medicine physician currently practicing in Jackson, Wyo. and is clinical faculty for the University of Washington School of Medicine. Locally, he serves as the medical director for Grand Teton National Park, Teton County Search & Rescue, Jackson Hole Fire/EMS. On a national level, Will serves on the National Park Service EMS Advisory Council and also on the American Heart Association First Aid Subcommittee for the 2010 guidelines. Dr. Smith is also a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve and has completed numerous overseas deployments to both combat zones (Iraq twice) as well as other remote areas to practice austere medicine

(Egypt, Panama, El Salvador, and most recently Croatia). His combat experience, prehospital EMS experience as a paramedic, as well as his technical search and rescue skills have lead to numerous speaking engagements and consulting in Wilderness and Emergency Medicine around the world.

**Jeannette Stawski** serves as executive director for the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE). She has worked as an LNT Master Educator, a NOLS instructor, a wilderness medicine instructor for the Wilderness Medical Training Center, and an EMT. Jeannette has a bachelor's in resource policy and behavior from the University of Michigan and is a Certified Association Executive [CAE]. Jeannette completed 11 years as the director of Outdoor Adventures at the University of Michigan. Prior to working for U of M, Jeannette worked for five summers as a professional outdoor guide. Jeannette has two children Gretel, 8 and Thor, 5. She enjoys open water swimming and is currently learning the sport of skate skiing.

**Cynthia B. Stevens, M.D.** is a Board certified psychiatrist and certified psychoanalyst. She is a cum laude graduate of Georgetown University School of Medicine. She completed her postgraduate medical training at Georgetown University and George Washington University Medical Centers and is a clinical professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the George Washington University Medical Center. Cynthia has been nationally recognized for her outstanding contributions to medical student and resident education and has been awarded the Golden Apple Award for Outstanding Contributions to Residency Teaching and Education four times. She is a fellow of the Academy of Wilderness Medicine and a Wilderness First Responder as well as a NOLS graduate. She has a long standing love of the outdoors and has hiked and climbed in the Wind River Mountains and in many of the major mountain ranges of the world.

**Paul Stonehouse, Ph.D.**, is associate professor of outdoor leadership at Simpson University in Redding, Calif. His interests lie in moral philosophy, theology, and wilderness travel by foot and canoe.

**Justin Talbot** is the director of wilderness programs and risk management at the High Mountain Institute in Leadville, Colo. HMI's defining program is the Rocky Mountain Semester, a semester-long academic and wilderness program for high school juniors. HMI also offers a Summer Term, wilderness medicine, avalanche, and other custom courses.

**Shana Tarter** is the assistant director for NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute. In addition to two decades of experience in wilderness medicine and outdoor education, she chaired the Wilderness Risk Management Conference Steering Committee for five years.

**Liz Tuohy** has worked at NOLS for 19 years, serving as field instructor, admissions officer, and program director for NOLS Rocky Mountain overseeing risk management, staff performance, student outcomes and curriculum. She currently leads NOLS Risk Management Services, which offers consulting and training to organizations internationally. Liz is chair of the

WRMC Steering Committee.

**Becky van Horsen** has been working to create amazing outdoor adventures for people of all ability levels for over 10 years. Currently, she is managing a whitewater rafting program for Splore, a nonprofit that provides whitewater rafting, rock climbing, canoeing, and winter sports for people with disabilities and disadvantages. She has had the privilege of sharing the American, Klamath, Rogue, Colorado, and Green rivers with people who have visual, physical, emotional, developmental, and hearing impairments.

**Mark Vermeal** is vice president of safety for Outward Bound, USA. He is responsible for developing and implementing strategies that enhance a culture and climate for risk management for thousands of participants and staff nationwide. Mark has over 15 years experience at the director level and managing staff at organizations like the SCA and White Mountain School. Mark has been a WEMT, wilderness medicine instructor, classroom teacher, and is a certified AMGA Rock Instructor. He has presented at the WRMC since 2007.

**Dr. Will White, LCSW**, is the co-founder and clinical supervisor of Summit Achievement. Summit Achievement is a licensed adolescent residential treatment program with a wilderness component located in Stow, Maine. Will has worked with challenging adolescents for over 27 years. His doctoral dissertation traced the evolution of wilderness therapy through critical leaders and incidents. Will is a frequent speaker and writer on the topic of wilderness/adventure therapy.

**Jed Williamson, M.Ed.** is the past president of Sterling College in Virginia. He is co-author of the *AEE Accreditation Standards for Adventure Programs*, editor of *Accidents in North American Mountaineering* and co-designer of the "Live, Learn, and Teach" graduate program in experiential education at UNH. He has conducted over 70 risk management reviews and accident investigations for schools, colleges, and adventure programs.

**Dave Yacubian** is co-owner and lead consultant for Ready SF, a San Francisco based company specializing in risk management and emergency preparedness. He also works as a consultant and trainer for NOLS Professional Training and instructs for NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute. From 2005-2010, he was the risk management director for NatureBridge. Since 2006, Dave has volunteered and served on the board of directors of ETC, an organization that provides outdoor adventures for disabled participants. He lives in San Francisco with his wife and two daughters.

**Lester Zook** directs the Outdoor Ministry program at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg Va. In addition, he owns WILD GUYde Adventures—a guide service for taking families, camp groups, scout troops, and individuals climbing, caving, and paddling in the Shenandoah Valley, along Virginia's Blue Ridge, and in the caves and mountains of West Virginia's Allegheny Front. His doctorate is from the University of Virginia, and he is a member of AMGA, PCIA, and NSS. He and his wife have four children and one grandson.



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Gray Wolf Ranch has a mission to provide a natural, safe, and supportive setting for beginning a structured progression toward a sober lifestyle. We believe that we live and work on recovery as a community and, while ultimately the journey toward sobriety is a personal one, it is best undertaken in the company of friends.



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NEMO Equipment, manufacturers of Sleeping pads, sleeping bags and tents, designs products to improve the experience of adventure. NEMO believes meaningful adventures are possible for everyone, anywhere. Possible, that is, if you bring the will, the imagination, and the right gear.



For 47 years, students with the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) have learned and mastered outdoor skills, developed leadership, and studied environmental ethics in some of the wildest classrooms in the world!



Award-winning, nature-based adventures since 1969. From ½-day outings to 2-week expeditions on the best rivers in the West, O.A.R.S. outfits a wilderness trip for every budget.



Outward Bound delivers challenging learning expeditions that inspire character development, leadership, and service. Outward Bound helps its students realize their full potential, for themselves, and for a better world.



The Student Conservation Association (SCA) provides college- and high-school-aged members with hands-on conservation service opportunities in virtually every field imaginable, from tracking grizzlies through the Tetons to restoring desert

ecosystems and teaching environmental education at Washington D.C.'s Urban Tree House.



NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI) has a goal to provide the highest quality education and information for the recognition, treatment, and prevention of wilderness emergencies. Our dynamic curriculum is accurate, practical and relevant.

WMI offers a wide range of courses, tailored to meet the needs of all students, from novices to medical professionals. Join us!

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Colorado Outward Bound School's mission is to provide exceptional character education by inspiring self-discovery, fostering teamwork and compassion, and developing interpersonal and leadership skills through transformational wilderness experiences.



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Outdoor Safety Institute (OSI) provides outdoor education and recreation providers with safety, liability, and program management solutions. OSI provides global safety management support to organizations of all types operating in remote environments.



Outward Bound delivers challenging learning expeditions that inspire character development, leadership, and service. Outward Bound helps its students realize their full potential, for themselves, and for a better world.



“The Natural Choice for Insurance”, Pachner & Associates Insurance Brokers and Consultants specializes in the non-motorized outdoor recreation industry, trail associations and outdoor clubs, nature education, environmental conservation, and environmental research organizations.



The reSTART Center for Technology Sustainability is a unique residential treatment facility that engages emerging adults in therapeutic adventure experiences. Adults 17-28 are referred by wilderness programs, educational consultants, counselors, and family members who recognize the benefits of developing a plan for managing digital distractions.



The Student Conservation Association (SCA) provides college- and high-school-aged members with hands-on conservation service opportunities in virtually every field imaginable, from tracking grizzlies through the Tetons to restoring desert ecosystems and teaching environmental education at Washington D.C.'s Urban Tree House.



SROM is a premier Christian outdoor leadership education and wilderness adventure ministry. Our programming activities include backpacking, rock climbing, mountaineering, backcountry cooking, alpine and backcountry living, orienteering, and community building. SROM programming occurs in the heart of the Rocky Mountains and desert southwest with courses and trips conducted in Wyoming, Colorado, and Arizona in locations such as Rocky Mountain National Park, Wind River Wilderness, and Grand Canyon National Park. SROM is the only wilderness ministry accredited by the Association for Experiential Education.



NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI) has a goal to provide the highest quality education and information for the recognition, treatment, and prevention of wilderness emergencies. Our dynamic curriculum is accurate, practical, and relevant. WMI offers a wide range of courses, tailored to meet the needs of all students, from novices to medical professionals.



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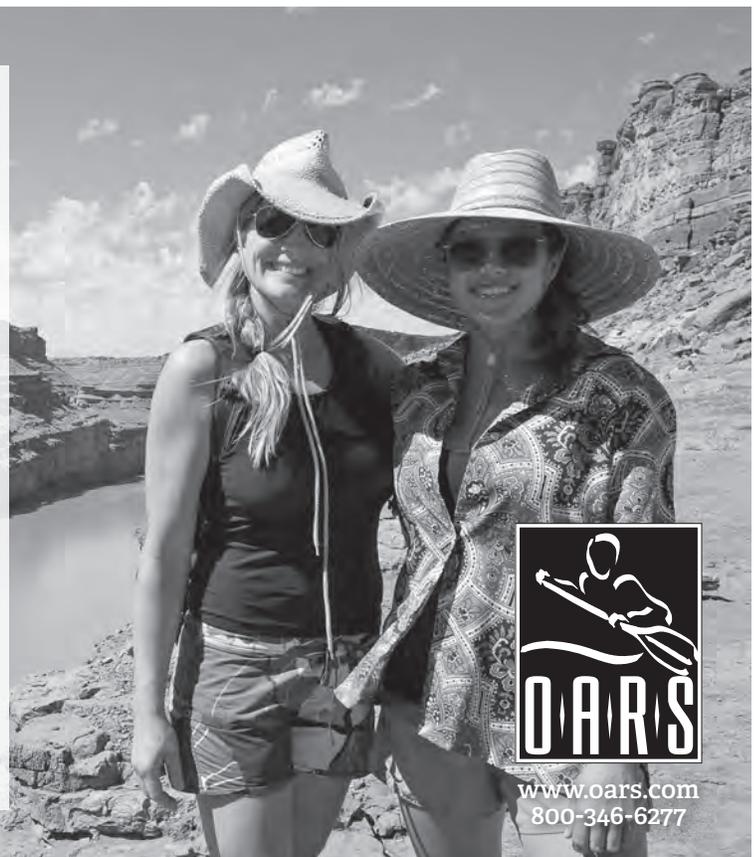
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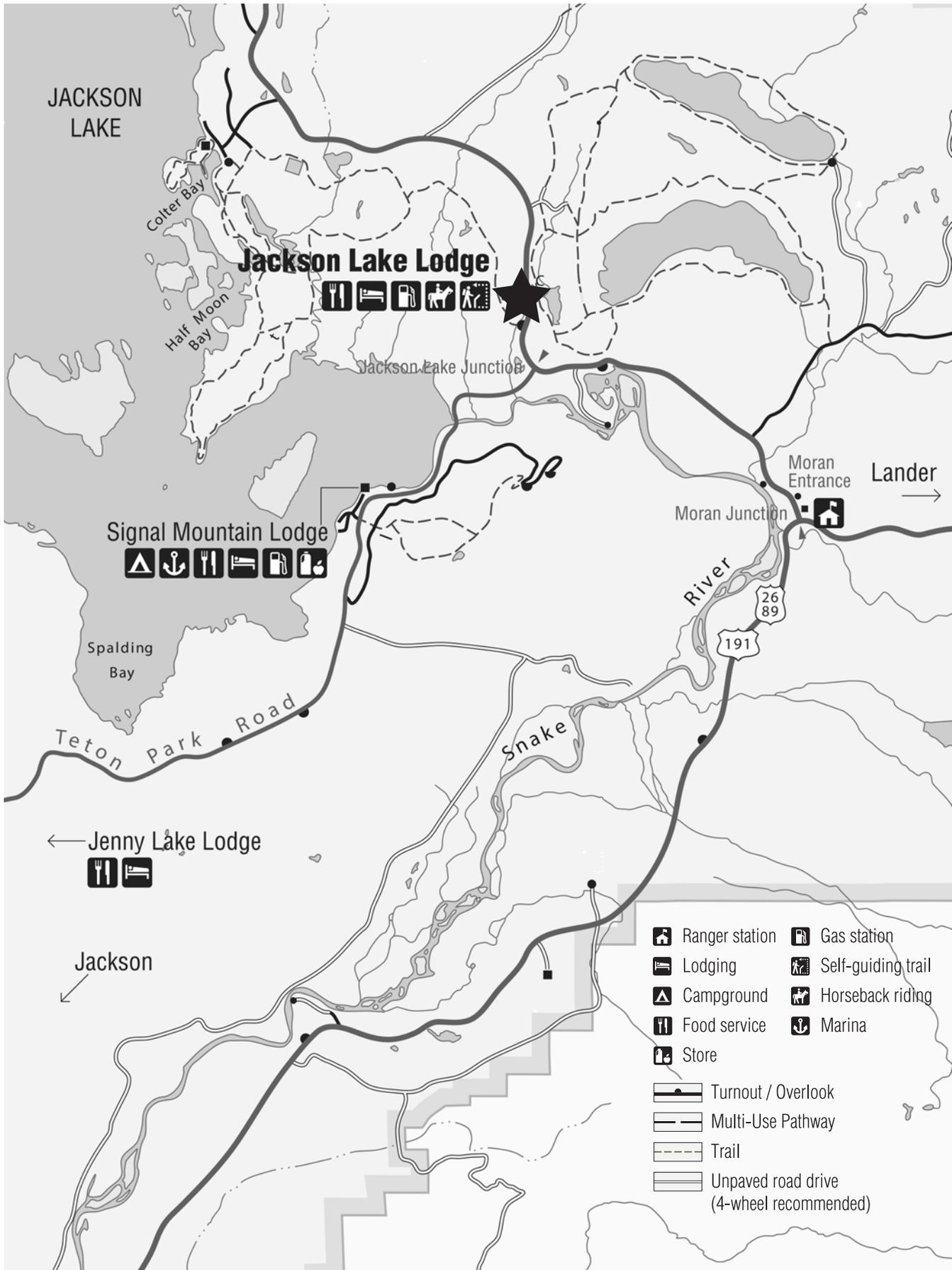


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# Jackson Lake Lodge



## Jackson Lake Lodge

### Ammenities

Complimentary WiFi, an outdoor heated swimming pool, and fine dining are just a few of the amenities that Jackson Lake Lodge has to offer. Its best features are its 60-foot windows and patio that span the entire lobby, offering breathtaking views of the Grand Tetons.

### Sustainability

The WRMC is committed to developing sustainable event practices. Jackson Lake Lodge actively tracks its environmental impacts. Recycling, decreasing use of resources, and minimizing pollution are preferred methods of reducing the carbon footprint at their facilities, and they strongly encourage these practices by their employees, guests, suppliers, and park visitors. You can help with sustainability efforts by bringing your own coffee mug and water bottle for your beverages.

## Meals and Dining

Your registration fee includes the following food: appetizers at the Exhibitor reception, coffee and snacks during morning and afternoon breaks, and a meal at the Keynote dinner.

For your convenience, Jackson Lake Lodge is offering breakfast and lunch buffets on Tuesday and Wednesday in the Mural Dining Room for a special WRMC rate of \$12 and \$15 respectively.

### Keynote Dinner

Dinner prior to Laurence Gonzales' keynote address on Wednesday, Oct. 2 is included in your WRMC registration and will commence at about 6:30 p.m. following a social hour and remarks from Steering Committee members. If your travel plans don't allow you to join us for dinner, please notify WRMC staff so we do not waste food.

### *Onsite Dining at Jackson Lake Lodge*

#### Mural Room

Prepare yourself for a culinary experience with a twist which defines Rocky Mountain cuisine that is the perfect complement to the views. The Mural Room offers breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

#### Blue Heron

Voted as the "best watering hole – human division" by the National Park Foundation, the Blue Heron Lounge offers casual dining that includes delectable small bite plates and tapas-style finger food.

#### Pioneer Grill

For a less formal setting, the Pioneer Grill offers breakfast, lunch, and dinner in a classic 1950's-style service. It is one of the oldest, and rumored to be the longest continual counter, of all soda fountains still in use today.

## To Do Outside of the WRMC

### Stay Active

Grand Teton National Park offers an endless amount of outdoor activities, from extreme sports to leisure activities such as wildlife viewing. Head out for a hike on one of the park's numerous trails, book an activity such as horseback riding with the Jackson Lake Lodge staff, or enjoy a swim in the onsite heated swimming pool. Be sure to pack appropriately for whatever activity interests you and don't forget to bring your backpack!

### Grand Teton National Park

"Rising above a scene rich with extraordinary wildlife, pristine lakes, and alpine terrain, the Teton Range stands monument to the people who fought to protect it. These are mountains of the imagination. Mountains that led to the creation of Grand Teton National Park where you can explore over two hundred miles of trails, float the Snake River or enjoy the serenity of this remarkable place." Plan your visit at [www.nps.gov/grte](http://www.nps.gov/grte)

### Yellowstone National Park

"It's wonderland. Old Faithful and the majority of the world's geysers are preserved here. They are the main reason the park was established in 1872 as America's first national park – an

idea that spread worldwide. A mountain wildland, home to grizzly bears, wolves, and herds of bison and elk, the park is the core of one of the last, nearly intact, natural ecosystems in the Earth's temperate zone." Look for things to do at [www.nps.gov/yell](http://www.nps.gov/yell)

Explore all there is to do in Jackson, WY – places to eat, museums, shopping, tours and activities – at [www.jacksonholechamber.com](http://www.jacksonholechamber.com)

### The Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival

Will be taking place Sept. 23-27

Sept 21-24 Jackson Hole Conservation Summit: Great Apes

Sept 23-27 Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival

Sept 27-29 Best of Festival Public Screenings & Keynotes

[www.jhfestival.org](http://www.jhfestival.org)

### The Teton Raptor Center

Located in Wilson, WY; offers tours Tuesday –Thursday mornings: [www.tetonraptorcenter.org](http://www.tetonraptorcenter.org)

# TWENTY YEARS OF PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FOR WILDERNESS RISK MANAGEMENT

Matthew (Max) McQuarrie and Liz Tuohy



The story goes that famous mountaineer and outdoor educator Willie Unsoeld was once asked by a fearful parent if he could guarantee her son's safety on an Outward Bound course. No, he told her. But by sheltering her son from risk, he added, she would guarantee the death of his soul. Quality outdoor adventure and education programs have constantly sought the balance between facilitating activities emphasizing the essential value of risk in growing and nourishing the human spirit, and managing risk for the successful outcome of those activities.

*“...we feel pressure from our own sense of responsibility and drive to provide a better experience for our students.”*

In 1989, after climbing Mt. Warren, a young National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) student named David Black was struck and killed by falling rock while descending. In the critical incident review of Black's death, it was learned that there was contradictory rock-fall management approach practices between Outward Bound and NOLS. In trying to understand what happened and why, Black's family challenged NOLS to create dialogue that they felt did not formally exist with and among other outdoor organizations and professionals.<sup>1</sup> The challenge elevated growing conversations between NOLS Executive Director Jim Ratz and NOLS Safety and Training Director Tod Schimelpfenig regarding the need to collaborate with other outdoor professionals.

After several years of informal exchange, NOLS convened the original Wilderness Risk Managers Committee in 1992. This original group was formed by representatives of NOLS, Outward Bound, Wilderness Medicine Society, Exum Mountain Guides, Association for Experiential Education, National Park Service, National Safety Network, American Alpine Club, and Outdoor Network. In his opening remarks, Schimelpfenig said:

“I would guess we all entered this field following the appeal of wilderness, the freedom it gave us, the responsibility and competence it demanded, and the impact our programs had on our students. Today, our programs come under greater public scrutiny and the public demands more from us: we feel pressure from our own sense of responsibility and drive to provide a better experience for our students.”<sup>2</sup>

Topics developed organically between the groups. By the end of a second meeting in 1993, the committee established a list of common concerns to address, including pressure to reduce adventure in the name of making programs completely safe, lack of consistency in gathering incident data, the growing influence of technology in reducing self-sufficiency in the field, release of liability forms, and varied rescue expectations from remote areas. Committee members had also reached a consensus on two key points: first, the Wilderness Risk Management Committee was to be a communication forum rather than a standard-setting body and second, a far more effective method of sharing information and learning from each other's experiences would be to convene an even broader group of professionals in the form of a conference.<sup>3</sup>

In September 1994, 190 individuals gathered under a large tent in Conway, Washington for the inaugural Wilderness Risk Management Conference (WRMC). Over the last 20 years, the WRMC has grown and matured into a unique international forum for organizations using wilderness settings for educational, adventure, personal growth, leadership development, and conservation service programs to openly discuss current risk management practices, issues, evolving ideas, and academic research. From the first year, the WRMC has been driven by people who are committed to the responsible management of risks associated with facilitated wilderness activities. NOLS, Outward Bound, and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) have co-sponsored and organized the WRMC each year since 1998, but the dialogue among hundreds of organizations on topics related to program administration, legal considerations, field staff training, program practices, and incident response has driven the evolution of risk management in the industry for the last two decades.

The potential for physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth through wilderness adventure and education draws participants to outdoor programs. But in embracing these activities it is important to acknowledge that risk is inherent in wilderness experiences, as it is in life. It is equally important to recognize the need for organizations to continually learn, to share, and to evaluate methods to best manage that risk. These needs inspired the founders of the WRMC and shaped the emergent community that now shares lessons from both success and loss.

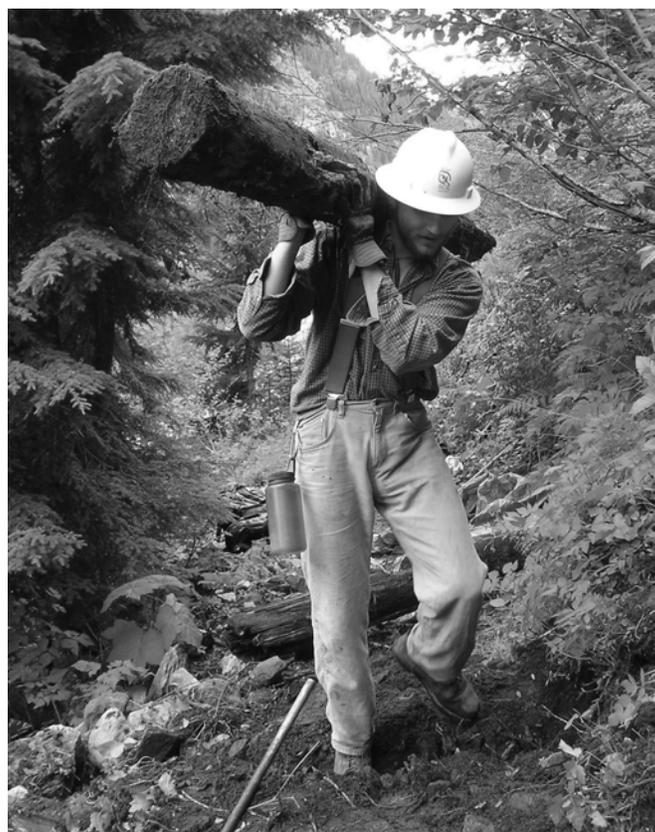


Photo courtesy of SCA.

Wilderness travel requires self-reliance because it is remote and isolated from modern technology. The title “Wilderness Risk Management Conference” is based on the foundational philosophy that it is impossible to create a completely safe

program. “Safe” is defined as free from harm. The phrase “risk management” reflects the goal to reduce the potential for fatalities and serious incidents, with the understanding that even well-run wilderness programs cannot guarantee the prevention of harm.<sup>4</sup>



Christopher Barnes

Risk management is best understood as an interactive set of systems. Wilderness programs contend with many variables, including the physical environment, stated program goals, and the people involved. Rather than overseeing a series of disparate issues, a successful program manager understands that—like in an ecosystem—a change in one set of practices will impact outcomes elsewhere in the organization. Each employee in an organization must understand the implications of their work and how it contributes to the organization’s culture of risk management. In order to share information and experience within the WRMC community, workshops are currently organized into key learning tracks that reinforce each other. Themes are legal considerations, staff training and decision-making, program practices, and emergency planning and crisis response.

### Legal Considerations

As one of the founders of the WRMC, attorney Charles (Reb) Gregg encouraged outdoor programs to take a proactive approach to legal issues. Gregg believed organizations should concentrate on running high-quality programs with clear objectives while emphasizing appropriate practices for activities, equipment, and staff training. Rather than reacting to incidents, the goal was to preemptively reduce their likelihood by anticipating risks and employing effective risk management and communication strategies in anticipation of the inevitable incident and claim.



Reb Gregg

He highlighted the importance of proactively building an informed, candid relationship with the program’s legal and insurance representatives to identify responsibilities and reduce surprises when an incident occurs. Responsible program management also meant having legal agreements in place between the organization and the participants and/or parents that disclose risks in advance and create a relationship of trust and collaboration in good times and bad.<sup>5</sup>

For 20 years, legal workshops at the WRMC have provided attendees the opportunity to learn and apply this approach to legal aspects of risk management. Workshops have included “Almost Safe and Proud of It,” “Use of Participant Agreements,” “Choose Words Carefully: What You Say Matters,” and “Managing Legal Issues After a Serious Incident: What to Do, What to Say.” Over the years, a wide array of emerging issues were featured, including the impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the legal implications of the administration of medications, and understanding the process of a lawsuit.<sup>6</sup> Attorneys presenting at the WRMC have hosted mock trials designed to provide perspective for outdoor industry professionals. Embracing the legal approach highlighted at the WRMC has allowed program administrators to care and provide for their participants while also assuring the health of their organizations over the long term.

### Staff Training and Decision Making

Managing field staff in outdoor programs is unique in that managers often cannot directly observe a trip leader doing their job. Consequently, trip leaders and administrators need to work together, be clear on protocols, and communicate proactively. Initially, the staff-training workshops offered at the WRMC emphasized technical skill.<sup>7</sup> In the last 10 years, however, WRMC presenters considered the many factors that influence a trip leader’s decisions. Rather than solely communicating instructions through a manual, recent workshops have identified the connections among hiring practices, training, policies, feedback, and organizational culture as it relates to staff behavior and decision-making.<sup>8</sup>

*“ Managing field staff in outdoor programs is unique in that managers often cannot directly observe a trip leader doing their job. Consequently, trip leaders and administrators need to work together, be clear on protocols, ” and communicate proactively.*

In addition to a trip leader understanding their role in the organizational system of risk management, he or she also needs to make effective decisions in dynamic environments. Tod Schimelpfenig describes the most powerful risk management tool as, “leaders making decisions in the field, from experience, with competence, and wise judgment.”<sup>9</sup> Not surprisingly, decision-making has been a WRMC topic throughout its history. As the community worked to improve decision-making skills, it has also sought out academic research on behavioral science and the decision-making process.

Topics explored have ranged from Gerald Wilde, Ph.D.’s risk homeostasis theory,<sup>10</sup> which he presented in 1997 at the WRMC, to recent discussion of Karl Weick’s theories of sense-making and high reliability organizations.<sup>11</sup> Other invigorating insights included Kent Clement, Ph.D.’s 2004 presentation of cognitive psychology, and how modern research

in brain function might explain how people of different ages make decisions in different ways.<sup>12</sup> Ian McCammon Ph.D., a 2005 keynote speaker, quantified factors that cause people to make risky decisions even when they know the risk factors that are present.<sup>13</sup> Through such presentations and the exchange that ensued, there has been an evolution in staff training and decision-making techniques in the outdoor industry.<sup>14</sup>

### Program Practices

No area of the conference better honors the memory of David Black than the commitment to compare and evaluate practices in programs where participants are exposed to similar risks. To this day, the WRMC community actively shares advances in knowledge about field practices. While doing so, the community strives to avoid the concept of a *best* practice, as it defies the realities of a dynamic wilderness environment, as well as distinct goals of different organizations and the populations they serve. Keeping to one of its founding principles, the WRMC does not play the role of standard-setting body. It instead remains a forum for assessing and sharing common field and administrative practices, ranging from lightning protocols to incident data collection.

*“...a wise leader uses all available and pertinent information for a decision, whether written in a book, found in discussion with colleagues, or obtained in a phone call.”*

One of the earliest and, to this day most controversial, topics of conversation has been the role of communication technology in wilderness programs. As advancements in technology offered more practical communication devices—lighter radios, cell phones, satellite phones, and personal locator beacons—their use became more widespread. The wilderness education community questioned if technology would detract from the experience of being in the outdoors. The conversation triggered a heated debate in 1997. On the one hand, one presenter articulated



Photo courtesy of Outward Bound.

that technology “dilutes our exposure to the nature we seek, and it discredits our efforts to provide our clients with the real lessons nature provides.”<sup>15</sup> There was also concern that instructors’ ability to lead and assess situations would be inhibited by reliance on someone else’s knowledge through

communication devices.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, it was argued, “a wise leader uses all available and pertinent information for a decision, whether written in a book, found in discussion with colleagues, or obtained in a phone call.”<sup>17</sup> The WRMC did not advocate one position over another but did provide a forum to discuss the topic. Portable communication technology has certainly become more accepted and expected by the majority of participants seeking out wilderness programs. One of many discussions on practices over the years, communication technology continues to be a vibrant example of provocative issues that arise as practices evolve.

Another theme of program practices brought to the WRMC addresses the needs of specific populations. Organizations like the SCA and the Santa Fe Mountain Center have identified and presented on the importance of cultural



Photo courtesy of WMI.

competency from a risk management standpoint, concluding that, “a person’s cultural affiliation often determines their values and attitudes about the outdoors, how they receive responses to messages from leaders, and even how they perceive the notion of ‘safety’ in unfamiliar environments.”<sup>18</sup> Conference attendees have dedicated similar attention to risk management questions regarding populations such as adolescents, adjudicated youth, differently-abled people, wilderness therapy participants, and participants exhibiting behavioral or mental health challenges.

From its inception, leaders of the WRMC were proponents of systematic reporting and collection of data on incidents that occurred on wilderness programs. Some efforts pre-dated the formation of the WRMC, and the founders wanted to expand and professionalize the effort. The WRMC teamed with the Association for Experiential Education to design the Adventure Program Incident Data Reporting Project. The goal was to collect in-depth incident data to understand the types of incidents that occur, more accurately describe the risks participants face, and to help reduce incidents. Participation was voluntary for organizations, and conference organizers provided tools and analysis. The project stood out as an opportunity for programs to share information and techniques to advance greater knowledge. Three reports were published and today, more programs collect incident data than ever before.

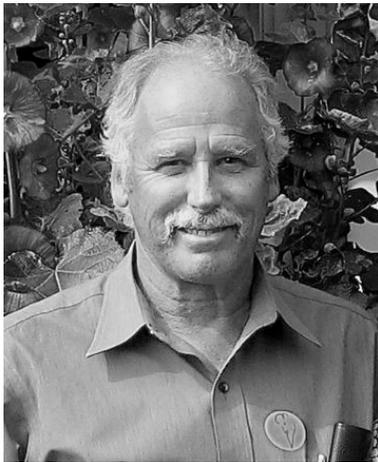
### Emergency Planning and Crisis Response

In an industry where serious incidents are infrequent, lessons from peers served to strengthen the response plans of many

programs over the history of the WRMC. In addition, the community has fostered a rich exchange of support after tragic and challenging circumstances.

*“ Over the years we’ve worked hard at systems and training and resources to help us manage risk in our wilderness ventures... Yet our locus of control remains narrow. We rely on the leader at the sharp end of the rope, with their hand on the tiller, with the participant and the situation in front of them. ”*

Industry leaders including SCA Vice President Jay Satz and NOLS Director of Risk Management Drew Leemon have advised organizations to write comprehensive plans that help to manage various needs in a crisis. Emergency response plans include procedures for field response, internal communication, media communication, investigation, and methods for compassionately working with survivors, family members, and staff. The goal of establishing these plans is to anticipate as many factors as reasonably possible with the understanding that, by definition, a crisis will include unpredictable elements. One significant conversation has been how freely organizations should discuss the circumstances of an incident, particularly to family members and media. The WRMC founders have long contended that a cooperative and open approach with families (and attorneys) can produce a more positive resolution of a dispute, even if a lawsuit is filed.<sup>19</sup>



Jed Williamson

a mountaineering trip. Relying on advice from attorneys and its insurance company, UAA suppressed information about the incident. After receiving support and guidance as an attendee at the WRMC, Ajango later shared her story to open dialog on how to better handle such situations.<sup>20</sup> In addition, she taught about the impacts of such trauma on families, staff and community, adding to a collective examination over 20 years on how to understand and support human responses to traumatic situations.

The stories that individuals have shared, though sometimes difficult to tell, have offered context for organizations as they write their plans. Deb Ajango had just become the Director for Programming for the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) in 1997, when the program experienced multiple student fatalities on

In 2006, Reb Gregg and Kirk Shimeall, then Program Director at Catherine Freer Wilderness Therapy, described the legal proceedings that ensued after a young woman died of hyperthermia during a field program. Despite a comprehensive risk management plan, developed from Shimeall’s WRMC experiences, Freer’s insurance company drove the process differently than that called for by the organization’s plan. Shimeall described the organization as being swept up into a long legal battle with a heavy emotional toll for which they were not prepared.<sup>21</sup> Gregg taught the value of preparing for the “reality of an organization trying to navigate with trust and integrity, but instead colliding with commercial interests and the court system.”<sup>22</sup> For organizations and for individual survivors, despite excellent preparation, support structures, and a rigorous investigation, a serious incident bring with it uncertainty, loss, sometimes isolation, and certainly learning. The WRMC founders’ intent was to advance risk management practices, including incident response. Each incident reemphasizes to the community the importance of this core purpose.

### Conclusion

On the occasion of the 16th Annual WRMC in 2009, the conference steering committee and co-sponsors inaugurated the Charles (Reb) Gregg Wilderness Risk Management Award to recognize exceptional leadership, service, and innovation in the practice of wilderness risk management. The award honors Gregg’s extraordinary legacy of service to the outdoor community, and organizations that utilize wild places. It also set the stage for the WRMC community to recognize the value of dedicated professionals who are generous in sharing their experience and expertise with the community. Jed Williamson was the first to be recognized with the Charles (Reb) Gregg award for his leadership in pushing for excellence in field practices, his commitment as editor of Accidents in North American Mountaineering since 1994, his outstanding contribution to the art and science of accident investigation, and his unfettered willingness to offer support to those who requested it.

*“ We have adapted. We have become more professional. We have pushed the envelope for each other - one organization addressing one issue, field communication or background checks, for instance, and raising the bar, and another organization doing the same with another issue. And in this, we’ve bootstrapped our way along, getting better at taking people into the out-of-doors and bringing them back unscathed, yet happily altered. ”*

In accepting the second annual award in 2010, Tod Schimelpfenig spoke of balancing the concepts of building strong systems with keeping decision making close to the field, saying, “Over the years we’ve worked hard at systems and training and resources to help us manage risk in our wilderness ventures...



Photo courtesy of Brad Christensen.

Yet our locus of control remains narrow. We rely on the leader at the sharp end of the rope, with their hand on the tiller, with the participant and the situation in front of them”.<sup>23</sup>

In accepting the award the following year, Lewis Glenn spoke of how programs improve faster by pushing and aiding each other saying, “We have adapted. We have become more professional. We have pushed the envelope for each other - one

organization addressing one issue, field communication or background checks, for instance, and raising the bar, and another organization doing the same with another issue. And in this, we’ve bootstrapped our way along, getting better at taking people into the out-of-doors and bringing them back unscathed, yet happily altered.”<sup>24</sup>

As the WRMC celebrates its twentieth year in Grand Teton National Park in 2013, over 400 dedicated risk management professionals from over 200 organizations will gather to carry on a conversation essential to the organizational missions and health of the outdoor community. These participant’s voices, passions, and experiences join more than 5300 attendees over 19 years, creating a ripple of influence that extends to peer organizations, their participants, families, staff, lands managers, and the public at large.

Attendees continue to reflect on challenges that face the larger community. Some issues that remain most pressing today, such as expectations for technology use and rapid rescue, were amongst those identified in the Wilderness Risk Managers Committee’s original conversations.

But other issues are more current or just over the horizon. The development of the 24-hour news cycle and pervasive social media have changed the way critical incidents are reported to and experienced by the public. How does this impact our ability to carry out rescues or investigate incidents effectively? How can we develop effective programs to engage returning veterans? How do we sustain access to wilderness itself, as federal and state land management agencies struggle with budget cuts and changes in priorities? How do we assure the very survival of wilderness and wild places in an increasingly urbanized society dealing with population growth and climate change?

While daunting at first, there is great hope that we will meet such challenges. We will meet these challenges by connecting more people to the transformative power of challenging themselves in, playing in, and conserving wild places. If we meet these challenges, it will be in large part be due to the combined intellect, experience, and passion of a community committed to a higher purpose.

Interviews and initial compilation by Max McQuarrie, WRMC Intern.

Final editing by Liz Tuohy, WRMC Steering Committee Chair

Special thanks for major contributions and insights by: Stacy Bare, Reb Gregg, Gabi Kilko-Jackson, Alex Kosseff, Drew Leemon, Kevin Moeller, Rick Rochelle, Billy Roos, Jay Satz, Tod Schimelpfenig, Steve Smith, Shana Tarter, Mark Vermeal, and Jed Williamson.

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<sup>2</sup> Tod Schimelpfenig, “WRMC Minutes 1992,” Wilderness Risk Management Committee.

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<sup>6</sup> Gregg, Interview with Max McQuarrie, June 26, 2013; Reb Gregg, “Almost Safe and Proud of it” Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings, no. 4 (1997): 23; Catherine Hansen-Stamp, “Developing Releases and Related Documents,” Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings, no. 4 (1997): 28-34; Catherine Hansen-Stamp and Reb Gregg, “Up or Down: High Tech? No Tech?” Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings, no. 9 (2003): 120; Catherine Hansen-Stamp, “Risk Management Issues in the Digital Age” (PowerPoint, Wilderness Risk Management Conference, 2009), <http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/resources.shtml>.

<sup>7</sup> Wilderness Risk Mangers’ Committee, Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings (Lander: NOLS, 1994): 1-169.

<sup>8</sup> Liz Tuohy, “Training Your Staff to be Risk Managers,” (PowerPoint and the Wilderness Risk Management Conference, 2009.) <http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/resources.shtml>.

<sup>9</sup> Tod Schimelpfenig (Acceptance speech for the Charles “Reb” Gregg Award.) October, 2010, [http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/reb\\_gregg\\_award.shtml](http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/reb_gregg_award.shtml)

<sup>10</sup> Gerald J.S. Wilde, “Risk Homeostasis: An Overview,” Wilderness Risk Management Conference, no. 4 (1997)

<sup>11</sup> Karl E. Weick and Kathleen Sutcliffe, *Managing the Unexpected: Resilient Performance in an Age of Uncertainty* (San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007), 1-160.

<sup>12</sup> Kent Clement, “The Psychology and Sociology of Judgment for Outdoor Leaders,” Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings, no. 6 (1999): 16-20; Kent Clement, “New Studies in Judgment with Regard to Brain Research,” Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings, no. 12 (2005): 37-41.

<sup>13</sup> Kerry Brophy, “NOLS Snow Scientist,” *The Leader*, Fall 2003, accessed September 11, 2013, [http://www.nols.edu/alumni/leader/03fall/ian\\_mccammon.shtml](http://www.nols.edu/alumni/leader/03fall/ian_mccammon.shtml)

<sup>14</sup> Tuohy, “Training Your Staff to be Risk Managers,” (PowerPoint, WRMC, 2009.) <http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/resources.shtml>.

<sup>15</sup> Dave Wescott, “Bring Back Natural Reality,” Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings, no. 4 (1997): 99.

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<sup>17</sup> Tod Schimelpfenig, “Cell Phones and Radios on NOLS Courses,” Wilderness Risk Management Conference Proceedings, no. 4 (1997): 102.

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<sup>19</sup> Catherine Hansen-Stamp and Reb Gregg, “Post Accident Conduct— Hunker Down or Cooperate?” *Outdoor Education & Recreation Law Quarterly* no. 2, vol.3 (Fall 2002): 1-6.

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<sup>21</sup> Kirk Shimeall and Reb Gregg, “After the Fall: Surviving a Fatality and a Lawsuit,” (Workshop at the Wilderness Risk Management Conference, Killington, VT, 2006); Shana Tarter, Interviewed by Max McQuarrie, July 8, 2013.

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<sup>23</sup> Tod Schimelpfenig, “Words by Tod Schimelpfenig on Receiving the Charles (Reb) Gregg Award,” (Speech, Wilderness Risk Management Conference, Colorado Springs, CO, 2010). [http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/reb\\_gregg\\_award.shtml](http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/reb_gregg_award.shtml)

<sup>24</sup> Lewis Glenn, “The Reb Gregg Award Remarks” (Speech, Wilderness Risk Management Conference, Boston, MA, 2011). [http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/reb\\_gregg\\_award.shtml](http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/reb_gregg_award.shtml)

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Join the WRMC Facebook page or follow us on Twitter to get updates surrounding the conference. Look for comments and photos from this year's conference, news on next year's WRMC, or use it to share information with your colleagues and to keep in touch with your fellow WRMC attendees. We are **Wilderness Risk Management Conference** on Facebook and **WildrnssRiskMgmtConf** on Twitter.

### WRMC Online Resource Center

The learning doesn't stop when the conference ends! Past proceedings articles, workshop outlines, and take home action steps from the 2013 WRMC and past WRMCs are available on the WRMC website for your continuing education needs.

### Charles (Reb) Gregg Wilderness Risk Management Award

The Charles (Reb) Gregg Wilderness Risk Management Award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions in risk management to the outdoor adventure education profession. The award's namesake, Reb Gregg, is a practicing attorney who specializes in outdoor adventure and education law. He has been instrumental in the development of the WRMC. The award is presented annually at the WRMC. Visit the WRMC website to nominate someone for this prestigious award.

Engage with us all year long at [www.nols.edu/wrmc](http://www.nols.edu/wrmc).



## 2013 WRMC Steering Committee

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*Legal Issues in Outdoor Pursuits*

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**20 YEARS**  
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 DATA

