



## Itinerary and Overview

Spring Southwest Pathfinder – 30 Days – Ages 18-25



Welcome! You're in for an experience of a lifetime! This course travels through an intimate landscape full of expansive canyon country views. Imagine paddling through bending canyon walls or scrambling down surreal slot canyons in southern Utah, then settling down for the night under a thick blanket of shimmering stars. Each day you will be getting to know your expedition team better, learning about the area and yourself, laughing with your crew mates, and exploring some of Utah's most mesmerizing and famous landscapes. You don't need to have previous canoeing or backpacking experience to fully embrace this extraordinary expedition, which combines beautiful environments and exciting activities with an emphasis on individual growth and community. While canoeing, you will learn the basics and finer points of backcountry travel and camping, as well as working in a team to achieve your goals. You will enjoy side hikes that often allow you to admire awe-inspiring vistas. As you move into the backpacking portion of the course, you will continue to employ your newly learned skillsets in the southern Utah desert as you and your crew mates take greater ownership over the course.

The Pathfinder course is specifically designed for young adults searching for a direction in life. This course offers a purposeful wilderness adventure approach to develop three primary outcomes:

- **INCREASE SELF KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS**
- **IMPROVE GOAL-SETTING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**
- **DEVELOP PERSEVERANCE AND SELF-EFFICACY**

Your Instructors are highly qualified and dedicated outdoor educators. They will serve as teachers, trainers, and mentors as you learn the skills required for wilderness travel. Through daily discussions, they will also help you and your group to discover the larger lessons to be found in these activities. You will discover new things about yourself: how you adapt to uncertainty, stress or challenge; how you can better work with others; and your potential as a leader.

Wilderness travel is demanding. This course may be the hardest thing you have ever done. You should be aware of what you are getting into and be excited about tackling new challenges. It can literally take every waking moment to get from point A to point B. From getting up early to pack your bags and cook breakfast, to paddling miles of flat water under windy conditions, or hiking with a heavy pack for what can feel like forever. Traveling in the wilderness can be hard. Past students agree that arriving physically fit and mentally prepared to take on challenges will enhance your experience and ability to do well on your course. This ultimately allows you to take full advantage of your expedition.

## Course Activities

**Wilderness First Aid Course** – During the beginning of your course, you will spend two days in an outdoor classroom at our Southwest Program basecamp, learning about wilderness medicine. You will have the opportunity to gain a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) certification during this course, which is considered a standard for many entry level jobs in the Outdoor Industry.

**Canoeing in Labyrinth Canyon, Green River, Utah** – You will launch on the Green River in two-person canoes for 63 miles through Labyrinth Canyon. The river enters Labyrinth Canyon slowly, named for the serpentine path it carves as it dives deep into the redrock sandstone that characterizes southeastern Utah and the Canyonlands area. Narrow and winding side canyons, towering cliffs rising vertically out of the river, pinnacles and ledges all await you as you fine tune your paddling strokes. The canoes provide you with great freedom and maneuverability. While many of the skills you learn canoeing are transferable to other water sports, the small craft will demand a high level of coordination and cooperation with your canoeing partner. During this initial phase of your course, your instructors will introduce you to the most important elements of the river life: environmental stewardship, outdoor cooking, natural history of the area, the night sky, and of course, paddling skills.



**Desert Backpacking** – This backpacking portion of the course will occur in one of several amazing desert landscapes of southern Utah. The corner of desert you will travel through is famous for Ancestral Puebloan cliff ruins and rock art. Various canyons and tributaries characterize this beautiful backcountry, providing a connection to the canyon you canoed through.



**Solo** – Solo provides an important break from the rigors of both the expedition and the distractions from everyday life. This is a truly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. With sufficient food and equipment, you'll spend 1-3 days alone at your campsite to journal, rest, reflect on the past and look ahead to future goals. Your solo site will be close enough to the sites of the Instructors in case of an emergency, but far enough removed to assure your solitude. You will not travel during this time and your Instructors will check on you occasionally, but you will be alone. Many students are initially nervous about solo, but later recall solo as one of the highlights of their entire course.

**Service** – Service is an integral part of the Outward Bound curriculum. We encourage service to the environment in the form of leaving campsites cleaner than we find them and practicing Leave No Trace ethics throughout the course. Whenever possible, we coordinate service projects with land managers (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, State Parks and local land trusts, etc.) and select social service agencies (nursing homes, hospitals, etc.). You also practice daily service and compassion to your crew mates, whether that's making hot drinks on a cold morning, or helping someone with their pack.

**Final Expedition** – The Colorado Outward Bound School believes that an appropriate amount of independence is a powerful educational tool. In order to deliver that benefit, our instructors purposefully and gradually transfer leadership

responsibilities to the students. This progression culminates with our “Final Expedition.” Near the end of course, if you and your group have demonstrated the necessary leadership, problem solving and wilderness living skills, you may be given the opportunity to travel without your Instructors immediately present. This “Final Expedition” will range from three to five days depending on staff assessment of student abilities and terrain type. Many of our students love the independence of this phase of course, as the group learns to work together, problem solve, and accomplish a goal independently, while utilizing all the skills they have acquired. Instructors periodically check in with the group to ensure student wellbeing and coordinate travel plans. When you emerge from this final phase of course you will understand a truth: For the rest of your life you and your team will see that there is more in you than you ever thought possible.

**Challenge Event** – There are no set-in-stone course end challenge events, as each challenge will be tailored to the current conditions and participants. The challenge event may take the form of a run or team challenge. This event is your opportunity to finish course successfully and with style, by embodying all the lessons you have learned during your Outward Bound course. You may be surprised by how far you can still go given the challenges you have already accomplished.

**Guided Reflection and Transference** – At Outward Bound we believe there is no learning without reflection. Throughout course, you will be prompted to reflect on what you’re experiencing on course, and what it means in the greater context of your life. Sometimes this is a journaling exercise, sometimes a group sharing experience, and sometimes a moment of solitude to think for yourself. You spend focused time towards course end exploring how your new knowledge, skills and attributes can apply to your life after course.



## Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to weather, your group's skills and abilities, and your Instructors' preferences.

**Days 1-4** - Course start and basecamp training in Moab, Utah – day outings from our campus, camping on base, and your Wilderness First Aid Course and Certification

Curriculum includes:

- Basic navigation
- Basic first aid
- Self- awareness
- Awareness of others
- Developing inclusive group culture
- Basic team decision making
- Outward Bound philosophy and history

**Days 5-12** – Labyrinth Canyon Canoe Expedition

- Applied leadership practice
- Paddling and canoeing techniques
- Backcountry living
- Conflict resolution
- Personal resilience

**Day 13** - Transition to Canyon Country Backpacking

**Days 14-24** - Canyonlands Backpacking and Solo

Curriculum includes:

- Advanced navigation
- Advanced decision making
- Goal setting
- Time management
- Peer leadership
- Self-Awareness
- Risk assessment
- Solo
- Transference to home life

**Day 25-28** - Final Expedition – Apply all you've learned to a final group challenge

**Day 29** - Personal challenge event, course end celebration

**Day 30** - Departure home