



## TECHNICAL ROPE RESCUE COMPREHENSIVE

Bellingham, WA

### PROGRAM ITINERARY

#### Program Details:

The Technical Rope Rescue Comprehensive will take place in three settings. The first will be in a classroom, where we will look at a variety of systems and discuss the issues surrounding them. The second will be at local crags where we will work in steep and high-angle environments. And the third will be on Mount Baker, where we will address steep and high-angle environments as well as crevasse rescue on snow and ice.

Participants will meet daily at **8am** at the American Alpine Institute. Most days will run from approximately **8am to approximately 5:30pm**. Classroom sessions will take place at the Institute.

Participants may choose to camp at Larabee State Park, located six miles from the Institute or to stay at a local hotel. The Institute provides transportation from our headquarters to your course climbing locations.

Temperatures at front-country steep and high-angle locations in the spring and summer will range from 50 to 80-degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures in the backcountry may drop to as low as 30-degrees. Rain is not uncommon, even in the middle of the summer, so dress appropriately.

#### Difficulty Grade:

Intermediate to Very Advanced

#### Program cost Inclusions and Exclusions:

**Inclusions:** Permits and access fees; Transportation during the course; Guide fee; Group technical equipment; Biffy bags.

**Exclusions:** Food costs; Personal equipment; Lodging costs; Personal health, Baggage and Trip Insurance; Transportation before and after your course dates, and from your place of lodging to our headquarters.

#### Itinerary:

##### Day 1 – Rope Rescue Level 1 - Operations (Days 1-4)

Expect to rendezvous at **8am** at our Equipment Shop. The first day of the course will be an introductory day as well as a classroom lecture day. Via powerpoint and lecture, we will cover safety/rules, NFPA

standards, scene management, systems overview, definitions, ropes and carabiners, friction devices, command, physics of rope rescue. We will do a practical application and overview of basic knots, hitches, improvised harnesses, patient packaging with and without a harness, rope climbing with a prusik system and a classic rappel. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

## **Day 2**

Today will be another classroom day where we will cover the politics of rescue, simple litter lowering systems, belay systems, high points, tripod construction, and the physics of rope rescue. The field session of today will be dedicated to high-angle lowering systems with a main line and a belay line. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

## **Day 3**

Today's classroom session will introduce helicopter operations, hauling systems, and a continuation of the physics of rope rescue. The field session will cover low-angle litter hauling systems with three attendants. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

## **Day 4**

Today is the final session of the Level 1 portion of the course. We will start with the classroom session, covering communications, an introduction to guidelines, and a continuation of rope rescue physics. The field session will be steep-angle litter hauling with guiding lines. If you are just taking the Level 1 course and not continuing on with the next portion of the Rope Rescue series then the course will be done roughly around 5:30, and your course will conclude. If you are continuing on you will pick up with the next portion of the series the following day. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

## **Day 5 – Rope Rescue Level 2 - Technician (Days 5-7)**

Today marks the start of the Level 2 portion of the series. The classroom session will cover knot passing with a litter, improvised high-directionals, the physics of rope rescue and pick-off techniques (B.C. Pickoff, B.C. Tilt Lift, Panorama Pickoff). The field sessions will cover practical use of improvised highpoints, and the practice pick-off techniques. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

## **Day 6**

Today's classroom session will cover difficult edge issues, pike and pivot techniques, floating focal point systems, and the physics of rope rescue. The field session will cover the practical application of pike and pivot. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

## **Day 7**

The classroom session will continue to cover the physics of rope rescue, an introduction to highline systems including an introduction to reeves (English and Norwegian). The field session will cover the practical application of highline systems. The field session will cover the practical application of pike and pivot. If you are just taking the Level 2 course and not continuing on with the next portion of the Rope Rescue series then the course will be done roughly around 5:30, and your course will conclude. If you are continuing on you will pick up with the next portion of the series the following day. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

## **Day 8 – Technical Self Rescue for Climber (Days 8-9)**

Today will be a full field day. We will meet at **8am** and drive over to Mt. Erie where we will hike in and begin covering ground school techniques - self rescue knot pass, belay escapes, hauling systems (3:1, 5:1, 6:1), lowering systems (munter, tube-style device, assisted braking device), rope climbing systems,

rappel systems (extended rappel, tandem rappel, counterbalance rappel), and multi-pitch transitions. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

### **Day 9**

Day Nine will be a fully dedicated field day. We will be covering practical applications in a high angle setting - self-rescue knot pass, belay escapes, hauling systems (3:1, 5:1, 6:1), lowering systems (munter, tube-style device, assisted braking device), rope climbing systems, rappel systems (extended rappel, tandem rappel, counterbalance rappel), and multi-pitch transitions. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

### **Day 10 – Day Off**

Day Ten will be a rest day in which students have the freedom to take a break and prepare for the Advanced Mountain Rescue portion of the course, rest, or practice skills from the previous nine days. It is entirely up to you. We will resume class the following day.

### **Day 11 – Advanced Mountain Rescue (Days 11-15)**

Expect to arrive at our equipment shop at **8am** for the first day of the AMR portion of the course. This will be a front country day that will include a comprehensive equipment check, so be sure to bring all of your gear. The classroom session will cover several topics including the strength of snow and ice anchors, bolts, two tensioned systems, plaquette systems, the diminishing loop and the San Juan pick off. Tonight you are expected to cover your own lodging, whether at a local front country campsite or at a hotel in town.

### **Day 12**

We will meet at **7am** on Day Twelve at the AAI Equipment Shop for our rendezvous. We will do a quick equipment review, run over the itinerary for the day, ensure we hit the road as soon as possible. We will drive approximately one hour to the trailhead for Mt. Baker. From there we will hike approximately 3 miles to a camp at roughly 6,000 feet. Programs in the spring may go to the ski area parking lot instead of the backcountry. This will allow for less time spent on approaches. Once we reach an ideal location for skills practice we will review snow school techniques and snow anchors, introduce steep angle litter hauling and lowering with attendants, and cover backcountry patient packaging. Tonight we will camp in the backcountry at a designated basecamp.

### **Day 13**

Today we will have an early start and begin reviewing crevasse rescue, in which we will conduct an in-depth study of team rescue as well as self-rescue in a crevasse fall scenario; instruction will include descending into the crevasse to perform first aid on the client before hauling him or her out. Systems we will cover include the drop C, 3:1, and 6:1 crevasse rescue hauling systems. Tonight we will camp in the backcountry at a designated basecamp.

### **Day 14**

Today will be another early start, as we make our way from basecamp to a location on the glacier where we can practice managing a litter on low-angle snow terrain, develop techniques to manage a litter through a crevasse field and an icefall zone. Once we are done for the day we will hike back to camp, pack up and hike out to the vans and head back to the AAI equipment shop.

### **Day 15**

Day Fifteen may be interchangeable with Day Twelve depending on the weather. This is the final classroom session in which we will cover high-end scenarios. This scenario will have a pickoff and will require lowering and hauling systems in complex terrain. The final field session will be an execution of a similarly difficult rescue. The course will finish around 5-6pm on the final day.

**Weather Options:**

The Cascades are a wet range, and a rescue team has to be prepared for wet conditions. However, sometimes rain and snow is a hindrance to the learning environment. This is especially true if everyone is cold and wet while trying to understand complex concepts. As such, this course has some poor weather options that will still provide participants with advanced level experiences.

**Optional Front Country Day #1:**

Instead of going into the backcountry, the team may spend a significant amount of time working on highlines and reeves at a front country location. The highline scenario will be designed to go over a serious chasm that will require advanced rigging techniques.

**Optional Front Country Day #2:**

In the unlikely event that there is a second front country day, the team will have a second difficult rescue scenario with significantly different problems than the scenario encountered on Day Five.

**Note:**

As the final five days may have up to three days in the backcountry, it's important that your lodging is flexible. We will determine how many days we will go into the backcountry on the first day of Advanced Mountain Rescue so that you are able to make plans.

Due to the significant snowfall in the Cascades range, it is common for the Advanced Mountain Rescue portion of the program to avoid going up onto the flanks of Mount Baker in the Spring. This is because it required significant road walking. As such, the team commonly does many of the Advanced Mountain Rescue techniques on spring programs near the Mt. Baker Ski area, commonly as day trips. For summer and fall programs, the team will hike up onto the flanks of Mt. Baker.