



## INTRODUCTION TO SWIFTWATER CANYONING

### Washington State PROGRAM ITINERARY

#### Course Learning Objective

A graduate of the Introduction to Swiftwater Canyoning course will learn the skills to be a capable team member for groups canyoning in the Pacific Northwest. Many skills are transferable to Southwest canyons, but this course is focused on the specific movement, rigging, and basic self-rescue techniques used in canyons with flowing water.

The weather and water conditions during this program will determine the exact daily routine. Some of the material may be presented on different days in order to provide the best learning experience.

AAI does not provide food on this program. However, we will likely go out to dinner on one or two of the nights of the program, and will regularly visit grocery stores after we complete the day's objectives.

#### Itinerary:

##### Day 0:

The program may start in Seattle or in Bellingham, Washington, depending on the timeframe. Information as to the exact meeting point will be provided by your program coordinator.

##### Day 1: (Canyon Experience)

On the first day, the team will meet at a designated location at 7am for a canyon gear review and/or gear issue. Once all students are properly outfitted we will drive to a nearby canyon and make our first run.

- Skills to be Covered: Selection, care, and use of canyoning equipment. How to move in a canyon and basic canyon rappelling. Team communications and trip execution.
- Student-to-Guide Ratio: 3:1
- Lodging: Frontcountry Campground

## **Day 2: (Ground School)**

The second day will expand on the knowledge and experience from the previous day's lessons. Students should be comfortable moving vertically and horizontally on a rope. Students will understand how to rig and manage a canyon anchor. This will be a ground school day.

- Skills to be Covered: Primary and backup rappelling techniques on single and double ropes. Ascending on single and double ropes (self-rescue). Movement on and rigging of traverse lines. Single rope Static and Releasable anchor systems. Anchor building and management (natural and bolted).
- Student-to-Guide Ratio: 3:1
- Lodging: Frontcountry Campground

## **Day 3: (Practice Canyon)**

This day will be a continuation of day-two skills done in a canyon to gain proficiency of skills in a canyon environment. This will be a full day in the canyon.

- Skills to be Covered: Primary and backup rappelling techniques on single and double ropes. Movement on and rigging of traverse lines. Single rope Static and Releasable anchor systems. Anchor building and management (natural and bolted).
- Student-to-Guide Ratio: 3:1
- Lodging: Frontcountry Campground

## **Day 4: (River Day)**

One day is reserved for movement in a river environment and emergency techniques used in a canyon. Some of these skills are comparable to what is practiced in a basic swiftwater rescue course. Half of the day students will be immersed in a whitewater river and the other half will be practicing emergency techniques and patient care on land.

- Skills to be Covered: Swimming in current. Team movement in current. Sunken equipment recovery. Evacuation planning. Patient management and movement. Basic canyon survival.
- Student-to-Guide Ratio: 3:1
- Lodging: Frontcountry Campground

## **Day 5-6: (Canyon Proficiency)**

Days 5 and 6 are for student planning and execution of a canyon trip. Instructors will take more of a facilitation role while students focus on trip planning, group management, decision making, and risk mitigation. Over the two days, students will have the opportunity to cycle through canyon roles and identify skill areas to work on.

- Skills to be Covered: Using online resources for trip planning. Group management. Risk assessment and mitigation.
- Student-to-Guide Ratio: 2:6
- Lodging: Return to point of origin (hotel or trip departure).

## **Day 7:**

Due to the potential length of Day 6, it is recommended that people who elected to fly, fly out on Day 7.