Group Leader Information Packet

WELCOME! We are excited you’ll be participating in an OMSI Outdoor Science School program. This packet will provide you with the information you need to make your OMSI Outdoor Science School experience as rewarding as possible. Please read it carefully and refer to it throughout your planning process.

Who to contact for help:
If you have questions about the checklist or any other issues, please contact the program coordinator or manager. They can interpret the checklist according to your specific needs, emphasize specific tasks, and walk you through the logistics. Email them at HancockFieldStation@omsi.edu or call 541.489.3233.

Planning Checklist and Table of Contents

ASAP
☐ Read over your confirmation contract to ensure all the information is correct. If any information is in question, contact OMSI Sales and Registration at 503.797.4661 or register@omsi.edu.
   o Expectations of the Group Leader. Page 4
☐ Arrange for chaperones or counselors at a 1:7 ratio per gender.
   o Notes on Assigning Chaperones/Counselors Page 4
☐ Choose a health officer.
   o OMSI Outdoors Health and Safety Policy Page 5
   o OMSI Outdoors Health and Medical Form Page 8
☐ Arrange transportation to the site for your group.
   o Directions to Hancock Field Station Page 9

Eight Weeks Prior
☐ Email register@omsi.edu with your 60-day group numbers. (Fall groups, email your group numbers no later than the second week of September) Please see your contract for the policies regarding requests for cancellations or drops in attendance after this date.
☐ Read the program descriptions; talk to the program coordinator.
   o Sample Schedule Page 10
   o Curriculum Options Page 10
   o Scheduling Off-Site Activities Page 14
   o Pre-Program and Post-Program Activities Page 14
   o Field Notebook Options Page 15
☐ Copy the Student Packet and send one home with each student.
☐ Copy the Chaperone Packet and send one home with each chaperone/counselor.
   o Expectations of Being a Chaperone Page 15
Six Weeks Prior
- Host an OMSI Outdoor Science School Informational Night. Meet with all participants to review transportation arrangements, onsite behavior expectations, packing lists, and specific dietary or medical requirements.
  - Background and Site Information Page 16
  - OMSI Outdoors Program Rules and Policies Page 17
  - OMSI Outdoors Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures Page 18
  - Packing List Page 20
  - Receiving Mail Page 21
  - Notes about the Weather Page 21
  - OMSI Outdoors Kitchen Notes Page 21
  - OMSI Outdoors Store Notes Page 21

Four Weeks Prior
- Inform the program coordinator of final group numbers. See your confirmation contract for the policies regarding requests for cancellations/additions after this deadline.
- Fill out and submit the School and Cabin questionnaire.

Three Weeks Prior
- Fill out and submit the Schedule Information questionnaire.
- Print/make field notebooks and begin pre-program activities if applicable.

Two Weeks Prior
- Finalize the program schedule with the program coordinator.
- Ensure that all OMSI Outdoors Health and Medical Forms have been signed and returned. (One form is needed from each person staying overnight.)
- Submit the Special Accommodations questionnaire. (Include information for all participants, including teachers, chaperones, nurses, etc.)
- Email the instructional group arrangements to the program coordinator.
- Email the cabin group arrangements to the program coordinator.
  - Map of Site Page 22
- Make a waterproof name tag for each participant (strongly recommended).
- Print final schedule and group lists for chaperones.

Day Before Arrival
- Remind all participants of departure time.
- Remind all participants to bring a lunch for the first day.

Day of Arrival
- Collect all medications and electronics from participants. All medications must be in original containers.
- Check that everyone has a lunch.
- Call Hancock Field Station from Shaniko/Madras/Fossil to advise on arrival time.

Upon Arrival
- Confirm actual student and adult numbers with the program coordinator.
- Put medications and OMSI Outdoors Health and Medical Forms in infirmary.

Post-Program
- Use post-program activities to help students reflect on Outdoor Science School.
- Complete post-program evaluation forms if applicable.
Expectations of the Group Leader:

“OMSI respects, values, and celebrates the unique attributes, characteristics, and perspectives that make each person who they are.” In keeping with this opening line of OMSI’s equity statement, OMSI Outdoor School uses and supports inclusive pronouns. OMSI Outdoor School staff will introduce themselves using their pronouns (they, she, he, etc.) and will invite students, chaperones, and teachers to do the same. OMSI’s goal is for every student to have an opportunity to be true to themselves.

Though many people might be involved in planning the trip, please designate one person to be the group leader. This person will:

- Be the designated contact.
- Screen, choose, train, and monitor chaperones/counselors.
- Act as or assign a health officer.
- Make final decisions on all aspects of the program, including schedule changes.
- Arrange participants in cabins and teaching groups.
- Plan or designate planning of school-led campfire(s).
- Set clear academic and behavioral goals prior to the program to ensure the students and chaperones are prepared to benefit as fully as possible.
- Prior to the program, meet at least once with all participants to resolve any questions or concerns.
- Remain on site at all times; be visible and available during all aspects of the program.
- Sign paperwork to confirm adult and student counts for final billing.

Notes on Assigning Chaperones/Counselors

The role of OMSI Outdoors is primarily instructional: **student supervision is primarily the responsibility of the group.** The group is responsible for student actions and their consequences. In particular, the group is responsible during:

- Bedtime/rest time/cabin time
- Meals/snacks
- Recreation time
- Transitions between activities
- Instructional activities

Please choose chaperones who are prepared to:

- Hike four to five miles a day.
- Be on duty 24 hours a day, unless given time off by the group leader.
- Motivate students to be prepared and arrive for activities on time.
- Actively participate in activities to learn alongside students.
- Help assemble packed lunches and hand out snacks.
- Forego internet and cell phone usage in sight of students (e.g. during instructional activities, meals, and cabin and recreation time).
- Stay on site, even when off duty, regardless of whether they have their own transportation.
- Listen to directions from OMSI staff; help direct students to safety in case of an emergency.
- Abide by OMSI Outdoors no alcohol/drugs policy, and smoke tobacco only in designated areas.
Chaperone ratios:
- Each cabin needs at least one teacher, chaperone, or counselor. A ratio of one adult to seven students (1:7) is ideal.
- Each teaching group needs at least two teachers, chaperones, or counselors; a ratio of two adults to fourteen students (2:14) is ideal. If there are more adults, the group leader should create a schedule for adults to have some time off.
- If you are struggling to recruit enough chaperones or counselors please talk to the program coordinator about the minimum adequate number of adults.
- High ratios of chaperones or counselors can be distracting for students and detract from the outdoor school experience. Additionally, per Hancock Field Station’s agreement with the National Park Service, groups on trails cannot exceed seventeen people, including chaperones, counselors, teachers, and OMSI instructors. Talk to the program coordinator about what it means to bring a high ratio of adults to students.

If there are any students with special physical, medical, learning, or other needs, please inform the program coordinator as soon as possible so that OMSI staff may be best prepared to aid in their success. One-on-one student aides may attend the program free of charge.

OMSI Outdoors Health and Safety Policy
Parents release their students to your school during OMSI programs. As a result, teachers or group leaders, and chaperones or counselors are responsible for responding to all medical concerns. All OMSI instructors have adult and child CPR and AED, and first aid or wilderness first responder certifications. They carry first aid kits in the field and are available for advice. However, they are not authorized to perform or assist in procedures beyond basic first aid.

One teacher or adult must be designated as the health officer. They are responsible for:
- Collecting and reviewing the OMSI Outdoors Health and Medical Forms; clarifying any medical issues and concerns.
- Making a list of medical issues and concerns, and discussing them with the program coordinator.
- Dispensing medications during the program.
- Making decisions regarding emergency medical services; transporting participants to medical facilities, if necessary.
- Contacting guardians for permission to give medical care, and regularly updating the guardians of sick or injured students.

If a student’s parent/guardian is on site (e.g. as a chaperone), they will assume primary responsibility for the health and safety of that student in lieu of the health officer.

Dispensing Medications:
The health officer makes a list of which students take which medications at which times. They keep all medications in their possession (ideally in a locked box) or in the infirmary at all times. They assume responsibility for dispensing medications to students when needed. If the health officer is away from any student who needs medications, they are responsible for designating a chaperone to dispense the medication at the correct time. If an over-the-counter (OTC) medication is necessary (e.g. a student has a headache, upset stomach, or diarrhea), the health officer is responsible for obtaining permission from the parents prior to dispensing the medication. OMSI Outdoors may have limited quantities of common OTC medications and first aid materials. We strongly suggest you bring a supply.

At the discretion of the medical officer, students who require an emergency inhaler or an epinephrine auto-injector (e.g. an EpiPen) may be permitted to carry those devices themselves, provided they
have access to them at all times. OMSI recommends the medical officer or a designated chaperone oversee such students to ensure reliable access to medications at all times.

**Minor Injury or Illness:**
If a minor injury or illness occurs on site, the health officer is responsible for treating and monitoring the situation. Examples of common first aid situations include cuts, blisters, headaches, and vomiting. OMSI staff can advise and provide materials. If a student cannot participate in programming, the health officer will arrange for their care and monitoring.

Students who are ill before the start of outdoor school should not attend. Students who become ill at outdoor school should be monitored. In order to reduce the spread of illness among participants and OMSI staff, students with an oral temperature over 100°F, without fever-reducing medication, may not remain at outdoor school.

If a minor injury or illness occurs off site, OMSI staff will preliminarily treat and stabilize the situation. Upon returning to the site, the health officer will be responsible for further treatment and monitoring.

**Emergency:**
If a medical emergency occurs on site, the health officer is responsible for making decisions regarding medical services (e.g. ambulance, air transportation, etc.). If no group members are adequately trained to stabilize the patient, OMSI staff will stabilize the patient while the health officer determines the emergency plan.

If an emergency occurs off site, OMSI staff will preliminarily treat and stabilize the situation. They will relay all pertinent information to the health officer. The health officer will determine the emergency plan.

**Emergency Transportation**
If a participant must be transported to a medical facility and emergency medical services are not used, the health officer is responsible for arranging transport. For this reason, we strongly suggest that each school keeps a vehicle on site for the duration of the program. If an OMSI Outdoors vehicles must be used, the group will be charged for use of the vehicles at $0.75 per mile, and the time of the OMSI staff member required to drive the vehicle.

In May and September, the risk of wildfire is elevated across Oregon. Schools attending outdoor school during those months must make accommodations for transporting all participants off site in the event of an emergent evacuation. If you are unable to provide accommodations, please consult the program coordinator.

**Diabetes and Other Serious Conditions**
Guardians of children with serious conditions requiring special care (e.g. diabetes) must bring a physician's treatment orders or other medical management plan to outdoor school. It must include regular daily orders, and an emergency plan for situations in remote areas. A copy must be kept in the infirmary where it is accessible to OMSI staff in case the medical officer is not available. OMSI's programs are offered to all children, regardless of ability, provided there are reasonable accommodations that address their needs.

The health officer is responsible for: arranging care, including a dedicated caregiver to accompany students who require special care; for regularly confirming that the physician’s treatment orders are being followed; and for ensuring and that the child remains safe. Dedicated caregivers must remain with the student during all activities. If a student is unable to participate in an activity, the caregiver is responsible for supervising the student. The program coordinator or OMSI instructor can suggest alternate activities.

Questions and concerns about these or any other health, safety, or emergency procedures should be discussed with the program coordinator at least two weeks before the start of the program.
Lice Policy
Participants with lice or nits should not come to outdoor school. If a participant is found to have lice or nits while at outdoor school, they will not be permitted to remain at outdoor school.
OMSI Outdoors Health and Medical Form

All students and adults participating in OMSI Outdoors programs must fill out this form completely. Return this form to your teacher/group leader as early as possible. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY IN BLUE OR BLACK INK. Note: teachers and chaperones are responsible for all medical issues at OMSI Outdoor Science School. A health officer (usually the teacher) is responsible for all medical and insurance information for each student and adult, and for collecting all medication and ensuring that each student receives medications as prescribed.

Participant Information

Participant Name: ___________________________ DOB and Age: ___________________________
Parent/Guardian: ___________________________ Home Phone: ___________________________
Street Address: _____________________________ Work Phone: ___________________________
City, State, Zip: ______________________________ Home Email: ___________________________

Emergency Contact: _________________________ Home Phone: ___________________________
Relationship: ________________________________ Work Phone: ___________________________

Health and Medical History

Please check if participant is subject to the following and include explanation.

- ADD/ADHD
- Asthma
- Autism
- Allergy
- Bed wetting
- Bee sting
- Blindness
- Deafness
- Depression
- Diabetes
- Dyslexia
- Heart trouble
- High blood pressure
- Seizures
- Sleep walking
- Other

Explanation: _____________________________

List all current medications, time(s) taken, and for what condition(s): __________________________

List any allergies to medications, the reaction, and the severity: _____________________________

List any past medical conditions, injuries, or medical illnesses that might affect the program, including any restrictions of activity for medical reasons: __________________________

Date of last tetanus inoculation. MUST BE WITHIN LAST 10 YEARS. (If your child was immunized before attending school, he or she received a tetanus shot at age 5.): __________________________

Describe any behavior problems or habits that would be disruptive to group learning: __________________________

List any dietary restrictions (please be specific e.g., vegetarian, no pork, etc.): __________________________

List allergies to any foods, the reaction, the severity, and the amount tolerated (e.g., “no raw milk/cheese but ok in baked goods”): __________________________

Do you authorize the health officer to dispense over the counter drugs, such as Tylenol, Advil, or Benadryl if you are not reachable to give immediate permission? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Provider Information:

Doctor’s Name: _____________________________ Phone: _____________________________
Insurance Company: _________________________ Agent Name: ____________________________
Insurance Address: __________________________ Policy Number: ___________________________
City, State, Zip: ______________________________

My child has my permission to participate in all sessions and field trip activities. I am this child’s parent or legal guardian, who is under the age of 18 years and who wants to participate in OMSI’s programs. In consideration of my child’s or ward’s participations in the programs, I hereby release, waive, and discharge OMSI, and all of its instructors, employees, officers, directors, agents, and volunteers from any and all liability to me, to my child or ward, and to all my legal representatives, assigns, heirs, and next of kin for damage and injury to my child or ward or to any person or property arising out of participation in the program, whether on OMSI’s premises or elsewhere. This agreement includes but is not limited to claims or demands on account of injury or damage caused or allegedly caused by the negligence of OMSI or any of the individuals listed above.

Adult Participant or Parent/Guardian Signature: _____________________________ Date: ____________
Directions to Hancock Field Station *Please top off fuel tanks prior to arrival*

The address for Hancock Field Station is 39472 Highway 218, Fossil, OR 97830. However, since the facility is remote, the directions are not always the most direct. Refer to the directions below or check with the program coordinator about an advised route.

From Portland via Mount Hood:
Take Highway 26 past the Mount Hood area to Highway 216. Turn left onto Highway 216. Continue to Highway 197. Turn right onto Highway 197. Continue through Maupin and across the Deschutes River Bridge. Take a sharp left onto Bakeoven Road. Continue on Bakeoven Road to Highway 97. Turn left onto Highway 97 to Shaniko. In Shaniko, turn right onto Highway 218. Continue on Highway 218 through Antelope, over the John Day River toward Fossil. **The last place to stop for gas on this route is Maupin.**

From Portland via the Columbia River Gorge:
Take I-84 east to Biggs Junction. Turn right onto Highway 97. Continue on Highway 97 south to Shaniko. In Shaniko turn left onto Highway 218. Continue on Highway 218 through Antelope, over the John Day River toward Fossil. **The last place to stop for gas on this route is Biggs Junction.**

From Eugene, Salem, and Albany:
Take Highway 126 through Sisters to Redmond. In Redmond, turn north onto Highway 97 to the junction of Highway 293. Turn right onto Highway 293 towards Antelope and Fossil. At Antelope, turn right onto Highway 218 towards Fossil. **The last place to stop for gas on this route is Madras.**

From Antelope
Follow Highway 218 for 15 miles to the John Day River bridge at Clarno. Cross the bridge and continue east for 2 miles. The Hancock Field Station sign will be on the left. Turn onto the driveway and proceed half a mile to HFS.

From Fossil
Follow Highway 218 east for 17 miles. The Hancock Field Station sign is on the right, 1 mile after the National Park Service Clarno Unit wayside. Turn right onto the driveway and proceed half a mile to HFS.
**Sample Schedule**

In the generic schedule below, programming in **bold** will be facilitated by OMSI staff; other activities are the responsibility of the group. Please read through the curriculum options and communicate with the program coordinator to choose programming for your group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrival Day</th>
<th>Full Day</th>
<th>Departure Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:00 Lunch &amp; orientation</td>
<td>7:30 Breakfast</td>
<td>7:30 Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 <strong>Introduction hike</strong></td>
<td>8:30 Pack lunches</td>
<td>8:00 Pack &amp; clean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 Snack</td>
<td>9:00 <strong>Field study</strong></td>
<td>9:00 Make lunches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 <strong>Interest groups</strong></td>
<td>2:00 Cabin time</td>
<td>9:30 <strong>Interest groups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 Free time</td>
<td>3:00 Snack</td>
<td>11:00 <strong>OMSI closing activity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 Dinner</td>
<td>3:30 <strong>Interest groups</strong></td>
<td>12:00 Bus drives away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:15 <strong>Evening program</strong></td>
<td>6:00 Dinner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 Campfire</td>
<td>7:15 <strong>Evening program</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8:30 Campfire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Curriculum Options**

OMSI Outdoors takes pride in providing quality, concept-based education. The goal of each lesson is to aid students in understanding scientific concepts, rather than memorizing facts. The concepts mostly relate to natural processes, cycles, and relationships; and align closely with Next Generation Science Standards. OMSI instructors choose activities that support their individual teaching styles, and though certain activities may differ, the overarching concepts for each class are the same from instructor to instructor. Talk to the program coordinator about concepts you would like emphasized. They can guide you to appropriate classes and ensure OMSI instructors are prepared to adapt their lessons accordingly.

**Field Studies**

Field studies last five hours and are the bulk of daily programming. Choose one field study for each full day you will be on site.

**Archaeology/Cultural History**

Thousands of years of habitation are recorded in the archaeological sites around Hancock Field Station. Students learn about the lives and lifestyles of prehistoric and historic indigenous tribes, and/or immigrant settlers; and the changes that came about through their interactions. Hikes can incorporate local pictographs, homesteads, and other archaeological sites.

**Arid Land Ecology**

Students learn how the rainshadow effect creates a semi-arid environment in Eastern Oregon; about the interactions of biotic and abiotic elements in ecological communities; and how limiting resources shape habitats and natural communities. They’ll study the unique adaptations of organisms, and the delicate balance of ecosystems. Students compare and contrast different plant and animal communities to determine the factors that make each area unique. Field hikes may include botany (plant identification), tracking, and birding.

**Geology/Paleontology**

Students explore the breathtaking hills around Hancock Field Station, focusing on the processes that formed the area and those that are now eroding it. Students learn about the rock cycle and the local strata. The local formations represent 50 million years of geologic, climatic, and environmental change. Students learn how fossils form and what scientists can learn from them. Since activities occur on protected property, fossil material cannot be disturbed or removed.
**Stream/Riparian Ecology**
Students compare natural pond and stream systems, and formulate a list of requirements for aquatic organisms to survive and prosper. This may include testing pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature, and other water quality indicators; and performing macroinvertebrate surveys to understand how aquatic macroinvertebrates can be used to indicate water quality. **Note: Riparian Ecology is not recommended in the fall or during dry years when streams are dry. Confirm availability with the program coordinator.**

**Survival**
Students learn the basic rules of survival, and techniques for finding shelter, food, and water. They get the chance to try them out in an arid environment. They may also learn the basic principles of orienteering, and tips on how to be rescued in case you become lost; and knot-tying, fire building, and cordage-making.

**Interest Groups**
Interest groups are one-and-a-half hour classes focusing on one topic. There is typically one interest group per day. Some classes are limited to one or two teaching groups at a time, so several interest groups may be offered per day.

**Avian Study**
With access to Hancock Field Station's study collection of prepared birds, bones, skulls, and feathers, students are introduced to basic bird anatomy. Equipped with binoculars and field guides, students head out into the field to look for birds, nests, and other evidence; and to learn more about individual species and their unique adaptations. Birds are usually more active, so check with the program coordinator about scheduling a morning class.

**Early Oregon Skills**
Students investigate the survival skills and traditions of the aboriginal people of the High Desert, including cultural history and the development of various technologies. Through active participation, students learn about traditional techniques for fire-starting, making cordage from plant materials, and traditional methods of hunting, such as rabbit sticks and atlatl (dart throwers).

**Ethnobotany**
Students use plant guides and observational skills to find specific plants and explore their traditional uses as foods, equipment, and medicine. Students may have the opportunity to make traditional preparations or foods from local plants. **Note: This activity is more successful when local plants are abundant. Please check with the program coordinator before choosing this activity.**

**Fossil Study**
This activity focuses on fossils – what they are, how they are formed, and what they can reveal about natural history. Students gain insight into natural fossilization processes, and examine fossils in the local area, building an understanding of changes to the ecosystem, climate, and environment over the past 50 million years.

**Insects and Spiders**
With plenty of live specimens, and Hancock Field Station's large insect collection, students learn about the special adaptations of insects and spiders and their importance in ecosystems worldwide. Catching wild insects, and using identifications guides, allows students to investigate insect anatomy and behavior. Students release their specimens at the end of class.

**Lapidary (Available April 15 - October 15)**
Thundereggs are Oregon’s state rock. In this class students learn how they are formed. Each student gets a thunderegg. OMSI instructors guide them through the polishing process, and students get to keep their polished thundereggs. While awaiting their turn to polish, they learn about rocks and minerals.
Thunderegg halves must be purchased by the group and sent to Hancock Field Station ahead of time (to allow for preparation) or requested through the program coordinator at least two weeks before the program. Thunderegg halves purchased through Hancock Field Station cost $3.00 per half. An additional fee of $1.00 per participant will be charged for use of the lapidary equipment. Fees can be added to the group’s final invoice. (see Lapidary Shop in the Logistics section below)

Due to the limited number of machines, and depending on the size of your group, lapidary activities may not be available for all students or chaperones. This activity is only offered April 15 through October 15. Please consult with the program coordinator to plan this activity.

**Leave No Trace**
Students will gain an orientation to Leave No Trace ethics and principles, then play games and participate in activities to reinforce ways people can tread lightly on our earth. This interest group can also be combined with an introductory hike on the first day of the program.

**Orienteering**
Students gain insight into the skills of navigating using natural signs and mechanical processes. Students learn about the earth’s magnetic field and how to use a compass. They are challenged to use compasses and paces to follow an orienteering course. For older students, the concepts of topography and map-reading are introduced.

**Predator/Prey**
In this large format tag game, students learn how trophic levels support a healthy ecosystem as they act out different parts of a food chain. Concepts of dynamic equilibrium and bioaccumulation are incorporated. This is always available as an interest group or departure day activity, and from April to June as an evening program.

**Reptiles and Amphibians**
Students compare and contrast reptiles and amphibians: their physiology, behavior, and the adaptations they have to a semiarid climate. Subject to availability, students may meet Hancock Field Station’s program reptiles. They may also attempt the capture and release of wild specimens, learning how to properly handle them to view them up close. Finding wild reptiles and amphibians is most successful during warm weather (May through September).

**Rocks and Minerals**
Students take a hands-on approach to learning about rocks and minerals: how they are formed, the characteristics used to identify them, and the tests that can be used to measure properties such as hardness, streak, crystal habit, cleavage, and luster.

**Skulls, Skins, and Bones**
This class about form and function helps students understand how animals are uniquely adapted to their environments. Students handle specimens, make observations, and ask questions. All of our study specimens were donated or obtained through natural deaths or road kills, and have been properly prepared.

**Weather and Climate**
Students learn weather-related concepts, such as albedo, air pressure, and humidity before using various weather instruments to measure them. Drawing on data they collect, readings from Hancock Field Station’s weather station, and their own knowledge, students are challenged to consider how weather and climate are related, and historic and contemporary factors relating to climate change.
Evening Programs
Evening programs are one hour and fifteen minutes and fifteen minutes long and take place between dinner and campfire or occasionally, after campfire. Depending on the evening program, it could be indoors or outdoors; and students may be divided by study group, or the whole school may be together. To assist OMSI staff and students, chaperones/counselors must be present at a one to ten ratio (1:10). Please select one evening program for each night.

Solar System Slideshow
Go on a photographic journey through our solar system. The slideshow photos are the result of work done by hundreds of people using telescopes and NASA space probes, including the Hubble Space Telescope. New images are often added as they become available.

Bat Slideshow
A slideshow on the natural history of bats, including the bats of Oregon, demonstrates the importance of bats in the ecosystem. Students learn about the myths and realities of bats and become familiar with their evolution. During late spring and early fall, students may have the opportunity to use bat detectors to locate wild bats around Hancock Field Station.

Birds of Prey
Students take a hands-on approach, handling study specimens from a variety of birds, to learn more about the adaptations that make raptors unique. Students may ask questions about raptors and other birds, and examine preserved bird specimens to help them answer their questions.

Eco-Games
Eco-games is offered as an evening program during times of the year when there is daylight after dinner. It can also be offered as an interest group or on the morning of departure days. Students play a variety of active field games designed to illustrate specific natural history concepts such as the food chain, camouflage, invasive species, and carrying capacity.

Environmental Forum
Students separate into groups and take on the personas of a variety of stakeholders. Working within the parameters of the activity, based on a realistic land-use issue, each group debates why their group should emerge victorious in a town-hall style debate session. The activity demonstrates the complexity of land-use issues and the importance of compromise.

Evening Walk
When daylight after dinner permits it, you may opt for an evening walk around Hancock Field Station. Watch for bats or owls flying overhead and listen for crickets, frogs, night birds, and coyotes. See the landscape take on new shapes and colors as the light fades and the desert comes to life. Students learn about the crepuscular habits of many desert animals. Available May, and September

Hancock Trivia
Students compete as teams in a game-show format science trivia game. Questions draw upon information covered during the week and offer a fun review of the week’s activities. This activity is most successful for groups that stay four or five days.

Night Hike
Discover the night! Test your senses though outdoor activities, while learning about the adaptations of nocturnal organisms. Night hike includes hiking along uneven trails in the dark, without the aid of a flashlight. Consult the program coordinator if you’re concerned about your students’ comfort level during this activity. Available March-April and October.
Observational Astronomy
Clear nights unhindered by light pollution offer views of the stars, planets, moon, and deep space. OMSI instructors will lead sky tours and use telescopes to bring distant objects a little closer. In the event of poor viewing conditions, group leaders are requested to choose a backup activity. Due to late sunset times, observational astronomy is not offered in late April or May.

Predator/Prey
In this large format tag game, students learn how trophic levels support a healthy ecosystem as they act out different parts of a food chain. Concepts of dynamic equilibrium and bioaccumulation are incorporated. This is always available as an interest group or departure day activity, and from April to June as an evening program.

Scheduling Off-Site Activities
Depending on your program schedule and group size it may be possible to schedule off-site activities. If your school’s transportation stays on site for the entire program, schedule flexibility increases.

Please note: access to some destinations/activities may limit group size and cost your group fees in addition to OMSI’s program fees. Please discuss these extra fees (e.g. entrance fees, mileage in OMSI vehicles, etc.) with the program coordinator before finalizing your schedule.

Cove Creek Canyon ** Maximum 14 participants per OMSI instructor, including adults **
Cove Creek Canyon is a relatively flat hike that focuses on the study of archaeology and ethnobotany (traditional uses of native plants). Students will learn about many of the customs of the native tribes that were indigenous to the area, as well as the pictographs they left behind as their legacy. A nearby homestead site offers a glimpse into pioneer life in this area.

Fossils in Fossil ** Maximum 14 participants per OMSI instructor, including adults **
Drive seventeen miles to the town of Fossil for the opportunity to collect plant fossils behind Wheeler County High School. Each participant may take home one or two fossils. It may also be possible to explore the cultural history or Fossil or visit the Fossil Museum. Mileage and entrance fees apply.

Robinson Canyon ** Maximum 14 participants per OMSI instructor, including adults **
Robinson Canyon gives students an opportunity to explore the Pine Creek Conservation Area near Hancock Field Station, and provides an amazing example of Eastern Oregon’s natural habitat. Although only ten miles from Hancock Field Station, Robinson Canyon has greater plant diversity to investigate.

Pre-Program and Post-Program Activities
All participants will require physical and mental preparation to be successful at outdoor school. Groups will need reminders about being properly prepared, and may benefit from practicing. Consider scheduling a day when everyone comes to school dressed in standard field gear, or brings their packed bags to check they have what they’ll need. Some students have never slept away from home and may benefit from a sleepover with friends, family, or at school. Focused activities that help students envision outdoor school and practice learning with all their senses will help them mentally prepare.

After returning to school, written and artistic expression – for example a mural or newspaper covering aspects of outdoor school – can be an effective way for students to process their experience. Such projects also offer an opportunity to do interdisciplinary work which can be used to fulfil some of the Next Generation Science Standards cross-cutting concepts requirements. Additionally, student work can be displayed at open houses and parents’ nights, and presented to administrators and donors to illustrate the tangible scholastic impacts of attending outdoor school.
**Field Notebook Options**

The field notebook includes pre-program activities and post-program activities, and places for students to take notes during outdoor school. Use of the field notebook is optional. We do request that students have, at minimum, a writing utensil blank paper to take notes or do drawings (for which any notebook would suffice). The program coordinator will email you the field notebook file for you to peruse and evaluate. If you wish to use them, please print and staple/bind a copy for each student. Inform the program coordinator about your decision.

The notebook can be printed, front and back, onto letter-size paper, then folded in half and stapled down the middle to form a 5 ½” x 8 ½” notebook. We recommend the use of the entire journal but it is possible to select only the sections you want. Groups are responsible for printing their own field notebooks.

**Expectations of being a Chaperone**

We look forward to having you as a part of the OMSI Outdoor Science School experience. The program offers exciting activities, new experiences, and fun. As a chaperone, you are a role model. Students’ behavior will reflect your own. Please give the attention, respect, and enthusiasm you expect from them. Note: Anyone possessing alcohol or illicit drugs of any kind will be asked to leave immediately. Tobacco products can be used only in specified areas within the site and only by persons older than 21 years of age.

*As a chaperone you are responsible for the following:*

**Direct Supervision:**

- Supervise the cabin group during rest time, transition times and throughout the night
- Enforce cabin boundaries – students should only be in or near their assigned cabin
- Supervise and participate in games during free times
- Fairly and efficiently rotate the cabin group through a shower schedule
- Ensure that everybody is equipped with standard field gear and arrives on time to each activity
- Check in with the health officer to know when to send students for medications
- Support the cabin during assigned cleaning activities such as Kitchen Party (setting tables, and washing dishes under the supervision of OMSI staff), Scrub Club (sweeping bathrooms and wiping down counters), and cleaning the cabin on departure day

**Community Building:**

- Include all students in activities
- Sit at and supervise a table with students during meals
- Hand out snacks and help students make lunches
- Discourage rough play, rude and exclusive behavior, and excessive competition
- Preview students’ campfire skits/songs for appropriateness, tastefulness, language, etc.
- Support OMSI instructors in the field by modelling ideal student behavior
- Refrain from using mobile devices in sight of students, and during activities and meals
- Stay on site, even during assigned breaks, to support the group in case of emergency

Upon your arrival, the program coordinator will meet with you to review this information. Please bring along any questions, concerns, or suggestions you have. We look forward to meeting and working with you!
Background and Site Information

Hancock Field Station was named for Alonso (Lon) W. Hancock, an amateur paleontologist who received national attention in 1942 when he made the discovery of a vertebrate fossil – a rhinoceros tooth – in the Eocene-age Clarno formation near the site of the present-day Hancock Field Station. He went on to unearth many other vertebrate fossils in the area, from alligators to prehistoric camels to three-toed horses.

Lon Hancock and his wife Berrie spent many summers leading young students on fossil expeditions in the Clarno area. In 1951, the Hancocks took fourteen campers and a volunteer staff for the first twelve-day summer camp under OMSI sponsorship. Since then, Hancock Field Station has grown from a tent camp into a modern, well-equipped environmental science education facility. Hancock Field Station welcomes more than 4000 guests annually.

Hancock Field Station’s location within the Clarno Unit of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument makes it an ideal place to study geology and paleontology. The nearby volcanic and sedimentary rocks contain a record of life from the time the dinosaurs disappeared 65 million years ago to the Columbia River basalt flows, 15 million years ago. During this time, mammals, flowering plants, and grasses became the dominant life forms on earth. The fossil record unlocks the evolutionary paths of plants and animals, as well as the geologic and climatological history of Oregon.

The juniper-sage grasslands provide a model location to study arid land ecology. Groups driving over the Cascade Mountains en route to Hancock can witness the changes in plant and animal life that result from the rain shadow. At Hancock Field Station, we expand on those observations, studying the arid environment and how organism have adapted to it. The nearby John Day River and Pine Creek offer the chance to study stream ecology. Clear night skies are ideal for astronomy. The area surrounding Hancock Field Station is rich in cultural history – Native American pictographs painted thousands of years ago, and homesteads built by settlers in the mid-1800s can be investigated at nearby locations.

Hancock’s facility is rustic, but well-equipped. Most of the buildings are wooden and were built in the late 1960s.

Cabins:
Six wooden a-frame cabins have twelve beds each. Two cots can be added, so these cabins sleep up to fourteen. The large cabins were designed for summer temperatures and are well ventilated. There are heaters in the cabins, but for early spring and late fall visits, warm layers and three- or four-season sleeping bags are recommended. Two mid-sized cabins contain eight beds each. All of cabins have doors, electricity, and small heating units. All beds are supplied with mattresses. The floors are cement, topped with rubber safety mats. Six small a-frame cabins sleep four each and have carpet, heat, electricity, and storage areas. The maximum group size at Hancock Field Station is 100, including students and adults.

Restrooms:
The restrooms/shower houses are a short walk from the cabins. The men's, women's, and all-gender restrooms have hot and cold running water, showers, heat, and electricity. In addition, there are outhouse facilities on site. We encourage all visitors to use these during daylight hours as a way to conserve water.

Dining Hall (Berrie Hall):
The dining hall is enclosed, has screened windows, and heat. Students assist with setting tables and cleaning up. OMSI prides itself on serving meals that are nutritious and homemade. We are stocked to provide vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free dietary options. We can also accommodate certain other dietary needs if we know well enough in advance. Please contact the program coordinator with any pertinent dietary information so that the kitchen staff can be prepared.
Classrooms, Library:
Hancock has several buildings and spaces used as classrooms. They house a variety of equipment and study specimens, including fossil, rock, plant, and animal specimens. The library has science and natural history books, guide books, and other reading books, plus a collection of card and board games.

Infirmary (Pill Hill):
Pill Hill is our infirmary and is stocked for minor first aid treatment. Please read the section on medical emergencies. To reserve an area for medical emergencies, Pill Hill is not available for overnight housing. Please consult a manager when making arrangements for overnight housing for ill or injured students.

Lapidary Shop (Pete’s Place):
Hancock Field Station has a lab dedicated to lapidary (rock polishing) equipment where students may polish thundereggs. This activity is an instructional activity and is scheduled as an interest group. For safety reasons, rocks are not cut on site by groups or OMSI staff – groups must purchase pre-cut rocks.

OMSI Outdoors Program Rules and Policies
Teachers and parents, please read through the following policies with your student(s) so that everybody arrives on site already familiar with the expected community behaviors.

During your trip, you will be away from your family and school. You will be living and studying in a completely new area. It is important that you have a safe and enjoyable visit. The goal of these policies is to ensure you have the opportunity to build academic and social skills in a safe environment.

1. All policies maintained by school administration apply while participating in OMSI programs. If a rule is not stated, common sense, good judgment, courtesy, respect, and safety apply. In instances where OMSI’s policies conflict with school policies, OMSI is willing to work with the school to come to a fair, safe, and equitable compromise.
2. As upstanding citizens, we obey all city, county, state and federal laws.
3. All living creatures, including people, are to be treated with courtesy and respect. This precludes the use of obscenities, jokes or slurs relating to another’s race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or physical or mental abilities. It also means that plants, creatures and all of nature deserve your respect and should not be damaged, injured, or harassed.
4. No adult may ever be alone with a child in a one-on-one situation.
5. Handling or harassing potentially dangerous organisms (animals, plants, insects, etc.) is prohibited.
6. No type of firearm, explosive, or firework is allowed. Sharp tools will be provided as needed and are to be used in a manner that will not injure one’s self or others. Do not bring any of these things with you.
7. Smoking or the use of alcohol or drugs (including marijuana) is not allowed. The use of any illegal substance, or marijuana, will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
8. Quiet hours are observed between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., except under special circumstances (e.g. morning walk). During this time, participants should be in their cabins, in their bunks, and quiet.
9. Sleeping areas will be separated by gender. Displays of physical affection are not allowed.
10. Students should not visit others’ sleeping areas. This is to prevent problems relating to personal possessions and bullying.
11. All personal and museum property should be used only with permission and treated with care.
12. OMSI staff reserve the right to enter, inspect, and/or repair any cabin or OMSI-owned building at any time. A courtesy notification will be given when possible, but is not required for OMSI staff to enter any OMSI building.
13. Unsafe activities must be avoided at all times (e.g. no climbing trees or running, sliding, or jumping on rough, slick areas).
14. Violations of these policies, particularly those relating to an individual's physical or mental health and well-being, will result in the disciplinary action below.
Behavior Management:
Step one: The OMSI instructor and/or chaperone talks to the student to determine they understand the rules and are capable of following them. Student receives a short break from the group if necessary.

Step two: If the behavior continues, the student meets with the teacher and an instructor to establish a verbal behavior contract. Student receives a break from the group and activities.

Step three: If the behavior continues, the student meets with the teacher and a manager to establish a written behavior contract. Parents or guardians will be notified of the situation and the consequences if the behavior continues.

Step four: If the behavior continues, further disciplinary action will be determined by the teacher which may include asking the parent or guardian to remove the student from the program.

Actions Which Justify Immediate Removal of Student from Programs:
All transportation, costs, and logistics for a student’s removal are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
1. Violent acts or threats of violence against students or staff
2. Possession of alcohol, narcotics, marijuana, or tobacco products
3. Theft or vandalism
4. Possession of a weapon
5. Offensive behavior or remarks toward students or staff, including the use of racial, religious, or sexual slurs or intimidation

OMSI Outdoors Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures
Emergency phone numbers and procedures are posted near each phone on site, and detailed procedures concerning OMSI Outdoors’ emergency plans are available upon request.

Medications:
• All medications must be in their original containers, and stored in a locked container.
• The health officer dispenses all medications, unless that responsibility has been delegated to another adult member of the group when the student is in the field.
• Each student must be told it is their responsibility to report to the health officer at the proper time to receive medications.

Minor Illness or Injury:
Report any illness or injuries to a teacher or the designated health officer.

Serious Injury or Illness:
• DO NOT MOVE the injured/ill person(s). Contact the designated health officer, a teacher, or an OMSI staff member immediately. Send one adult (or two students) with the following information:
  o WHERE to find the injured person(s) o WHAT happened
  o WHO is injured o WHO is staying with the injured person(s)
• The emergency phone number from Hancock Field Station is 911. Although there is no cell phone reception in camp, phones are available throughout camp for emergencies. Only the designated health officer or group leader may initiate calling for emergency medical services, unless another person is the ONLY one able to call. Please notify OMSI management when calling for emergency medical services.

Missing Participant:
Notify a manager immediately. They will coordinate a search effort with the help of other trained OMSI staff.
**Fire or Other Need for Evacuation:**
An air horn signal (three short blasts, repeated) will sound. Everyone is required to gather in front of the dining hall (Berrie Hall) for instructions. Please travel in and line up by cabin groups. Each cabin chaperone should count their group to ensure all members are present.

**Earthquake:**
Wherever you are, drop to your hands and knees. This position protects you from being knocked down and also allows you to stay low and crawl to shelter nearby. Cover your head and neck with one arm and hand. Hold on until the shaking stops. If you're under shelter (e.g. a table or bed) hold onto it with one hand and be ready to move with your shelter if it shifts. When the shaking stops and it's safe, meet at the dining hall for more instructions.

**Unexpected Guests and Arrivals:**
If unfamiliar people arrive on site, greet them immediately and introduce them to OMSI staff members. Please help us ensure that nobody walks around the site without being greeted and escorted by an OMSI staff member. If a stranger becomes belligerent, will not leave, or becomes threatening, call local law enforcement immediately.

**Power Outage:**
Activity will continue as scheduled. A manager will inform the OMSI staff via radio of any instructions for the group and communicate with the group leader if there is reason to adapt the program or evacuate the site.
Packing list

**Standard Field Gear**
We ask that all students, chaperones, teachers and OMSI staff wear or bring these items during activities. Keep this list in mind when packing.

- Comfortable, broken-in shoes, good for walking all day that cover the entire foot
- Pants that cover the ankles
- Warm layers
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Two reusable water bottles (one liter, or 32-ounce capacity), filled at the start of each activity
- Sunscreen
- A sturdy day pack to hold water, lunch, notebook, pencil, and other gear

Note: All participants must bring a lunch for the first day of their program.

**Sleeping/Nighttime**
- Warm sleeping bag (pack an extra blanket if needed)
- Pajamas
- Pillow (can be as simple as a stuff sack that can be filled with clothing)
- Flashlight/headlamp for in-bunk reading and travelling around camp after dark

**Clothing**
- Two pairs of shoes that are well broken-in. One for out in the field, and a backup pair, if they get wet
- Multiple pairs of socks (wool sock preferred, but not required)
- Two pairs of pants, long enough to cover the ankles
- Appropriate number of t-shirts, underwear, and socks
- Full brimmed hat for sun protection
- warm hat/gloves (optional)

**Personal Gear**
- Toiletries (toothbrush/paste, hairbrush, soap)
- Washcloth and towel
- Optional:
  - Reusable lunch bag/containers
  - Camera
  - Cash or check to purchase goods in the OMSI store
  - For adults only: reusable travel mug

**Please do not bring:**
- Electrical equipment (cell phones, radios, computer games, blow dryers)
- Snacks or candy (they attracts rodents which may damage your gear)

All clothing and gear should be marked with the owner's name. OMSI is not responsible for lost or broken items. Found items will be kept on site for two weeks. Please call your group leader as soon as possible to arrange for their return. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity.
Receiving Mail

Hancock Field Station receives mail on Monday and Wednesday. We recommend mail is sent at least a week before the program. This will ensure that the mail arrives while the program is in progress. In the event that mail arrives late, mail with a return address will be sent back to the sender.

- Student name and school or group name
- Hancock Field Station
- 39472 Highway 218
- Fossil, OR 97830

Notes about the Weather

The average spring and fall temperature is approximately 60°F during the day. The average annual rainfall is about twelve inches. Early spring and late fall groups should be prepared for cold temperatures, rain, mud, and even snow. Early spring days are in the 40s and 50s; in late spring, summer, and early September temperatures can reach 100°F. Most days are sunny and warm, but groups should be prepared for both hot and cold weather. No matter what time of year, there is a drastic temperature difference between night and day.

In cases where extreme weather requires evacuation of the site, schools/groups will be refunded the unused portion of fees. No other weather related refunds will be issued.

OMSI Outdoors Kitchen

OMSI Outdoors prides itself on serving meals that are nutritious and homemade. At Hancock Field Station we eat family style – the main meal is brought to each table and students are able to serve themselves. There is a side table with supplemental food options for adults, people with special dietary needs, and big eaters.

Vegetarian, dairy-free, gluten-free, and other diets can usually be accommodated as needed. OMSI Outdoors can provide foods made without a given allergen, but our facility is not dedicated allergen-free. We take all possible measures to cook allergen-free foods on separate, clean surfaces, but there is always a slight risk of cross contamination. If any participant has a life-threatening allergy to a particular food, contact the program coordinator immediately to discuss if the family should send supplementary food. All pertinent dietary information should be delivered to the program coordinator at least two weeks in advance so that the kitchen staff can be prepared.

Nuts and nut oils are not used in cooking in OMSI Outdoors commercial kitchens, however, we may use foods that may contain traces of nuts, or were processed in a factory that also processes nuts. Additionally, peanut butter is usually an option during lunch-making. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are always made at a table that is separate from all other lunch items to avoid cross contamination. If participants have an airborne allergy they can be invited to make their sandwiches before the peanut butter is brought into the room. Depending on the severity of the allergy, peanut products can be removed from the kitchen for the duration of the visit.

OMSI Outdoors Store

OMSI Outdoors souvenirs are for sale on site. Commonly, these include postcards for 50c, t-shirts for $10, and hooded sweatshirts for $25, subject to availability. The store accepts cash and check only. Typically, the store is open during least one recreation time while a group is on site. Group leaders may opt out of the store for their students. Please note that the store will be opened if another school sharing the site has requested it. The group leader may inform their group members that they are not authorized to make purchases at the store. Please contact the program coordinator if you have any questions regarding the OMSI Store.