

# ETC River Program Trip Packet



## **South Fork of The American River Trip**

Thank you for choosing to raft with ETC this season. We are excited to have you join us to experience the beauty of the South Fork of the American River, and the excitement, challenge, and connection to nature that comes with whitewater rafting. This is a memorable adventure, perfect for both novice paddlers and experienced river runners alike.

## **Environmental Traveling Companions**

Environmental Traveling Companions (ETC) has been providing outdoor adventure opportunities to people of all abilities and backgrounds since 1972. Beginning on the banks of the Stanislaus River, ETC began using volunteers to take people with disabilities and youth from under-resourced backgrounds on whitewater rafting trips. Decades later the organization has grown to include four main programs: whitewater rafting, sea kayaking, cross country skiing, and youth leadership development courses and is recognized as a pioneer in the industry of accessible outdoor adventure. With this growth, ETC has still maintained a strong community, where most trips are staffed by volunteer guides and participants are fully engaged in all aspect of the adventure. An ETC adventure is a unique opportunity to experience nature, achieve growth through challenge, and develop stronger bonds with fellow adventurers.

## **Trip Overview**

The rafting portion of your trip will begin at our River Camp at 10:00AM, regardless of whether your group arrived the evening before or the day of the trip. We'll start with an opening circle, giving the Guides an opportunity to meet your group and orient them to the plan for the day. Next we'll prepare for our trip, which includes vehicle shuttles, instructions on safety and paddling, and accommodation of any special needs. Then we'll get on the water for a day of rafting!

Our day of rafting will include approximately 12 miles on the Lower Gorge Section of the South Fork American River. This stretch starts with mellower Class II whitewater, and then builds to exciting Class III whitewater in the afternoon for fun waves and rapids. Depending on the timing of your trip, the special needs of the group, and water flow, we'll either eat lunch at the ETC River Camp or at a scenic riverside location. Our day of rafting will conclude at about 5:00PM, when we'll either end our trip with a closing circle or head back to camp for a night of camping and possibly another day of rafting.

If your group has signed up for a second day of rafting, we'll spend the night in camp then wake up the next morning ready for another great day of whitewater. We'll have breakfast in camp, then drive approximately 30 minutes to the put in for the Chili Bar Section of the South Fork of the American River. After a paddle and safety refresher, we'll get on the river! This stretch is filled with exciting Class III rapids like Racehorse Bend and First Threat. We'll break for lunch at a riverside location. After lunch, we'll finish the day with calmer whitewater as we raft to the ETC River Camp to get off the water around 3:00PM. We'll then either end the trip with a closing circle, or share one more night of camping at the ETC River Camp.

### **Transportation**

All groups are responsible for their own transportation to and from the ETC River Camp in Lotus, CA. Additionally, groups are responsible for shuttling their participants for the day(s) of rafting. This includes driving participants from the take-out location back to the ETC River Camp on the first day of rafting, and driving the participants to the put-in location on the second day of rafting.

It is possible to have ETC arrange for shuttle transportation for your trip. There is an additional fee for this service. Please contact the River Program Manager if you are interested in this option.

### **Trip Location**

The trip will begin at the ETC River Camp located at 6700 Highway 49 in Lotus, California (driving directions enclosed in this packet).

### **Overnight Accommodations**

If you have booked an overnight trip, you will be camping at our riverfront property on the South Fork American River. Our camp is complete with a full outdoor kitchen, accessible bathrooms (showers are only available to accommodate special needs), a river house for relaxing and group activities, and a campfire circle. Your group will camp in established campsites on our property, and can often sleep under the stars (tents are recommended for trips scheduled before mid-June).

### **Guides**

ETC has volunteer and paid staff Guides who are highly experienced and trained in whitewater rafting, first aid/CPR, and working with people of all abilities and backgrounds. All Guides are enthusiastic, caring, and responsible individuals who give generously because they enjoy sharing outdoor adventure and beautiful place with diverse groups.

### **Group Involvement**

ETC trips are designed to complement each group's unique culture and standards of behavior. Our Guides try to adapt every trip to each group's needs as much as possible. That said, we have several expectations of all groups. First, ETC trips are cooperative adventures and we ask groups fully participate in all aspects including trip activities (hikes, games, etc.), equipment movement and clean up, and group circles. Secondly, Guides will share trip ground rules and we ask that all group members respectfully follow all instructions to maintain a safe trip and inclusive community.

### **Agency Staff Responsibility**

ETC Guides are experienced in facilitating rafting trips and working with people of all backgrounds and abilities. We expect the staff accompanying a group on an ETC trip to be responsible for discipline and personal care issues that arise on trips. We emphasize group participation on every trip and ask staff members to lead by example to ensure all members of your group are engaged in all aspects of the adventure.

### **Special Needs Accommodations**

ETC is committed to making outdoor adventure accessible to people with special needs and our Guides are experienced in making adaptations for a wide range of physical and cognitive abilities. In order for us to be prepared for your group, we ask that each group complete the "**Special Needs Trip Roster**" no later than one week prior to your trips and discuss all special needs with the River Program Manager.

## Equipment

ETC provides all whitewater rafting specific gear, including rafts, lifejackets, paddles, and first-aid and safety. Additionally, ETC provides all kitchen equipment for food preparation. ETC does not provide personal equipment, and thus there is an enclosed "Equipment List" outlining what each person should bring with them. Additionally, ETC does not provide overnight equipment including sleeping bags, sleeping pads, or tents. While the weather is typically favorable for camping under the stars, we recommend groups with trips scheduled earlier than mid-June have tents in the event of rain or cold weather. If you have questions about equipment please contact the River Program Manager

\*Our Coast Guard approved lifejackets can accommodate persons with a max chest size of 58". If your group will have someone that exceeds this limit, please discuss this with the River Program Manager no later than one week prior to your trip.

## Water Flow

Water flows in the South Fork American River result from releases from hydroelectric facilities located upstream. Such water releases are not subject to the control of El Dorado County or commercial rafting companies operating under Permits from the County of El Dorado. ETC has scheduled your trip when we believe water flows will be favorable for rafting. However, ETC may have to change trip plans or cancel trips based unforeseen fluctuation in water flows.

## Food

To keep trips affordable, ETC does not typically provide food. For overnight trips, we ask groups provide food for themselves as well as approximately five Guides. We have provided menu suggestions in a separate document, though if you have any questions please contact the River Program Manager. If you would like ETC to provide food for your trip, please contact the River Program Manager.

## Trip Forms

Each person participating in the trip, including staff, is required to complete two forms: a health form and a liability release. The forms are included in this packet.

- Both forms must also be signed by the participant of the participant's parent or legal guardian if he or she is under the age of 18.
- Please bring these forms with your group to the ETC River Camp on the day of your trip. Do not return them to the ETC office in advance of your trip.
- Separate forms are required for each participant. Participants in the same family or household cannot use the same forms.
- Please ensure forms are completed using blue or black ink.
- It is very important that both forms are filled out completely. Please ensure no fields are left blank unless the question does not apply. Participants will only be allowed to participate if they have forms that are completely filled out
- Spanish versions and accessible type-friendly PDF versions of these forms are available upon request.

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## TRIP PLANNING CHECKLIST

### PRE-TRIP CHECKLIST:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit paid (within two weeks of booking trip)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Transportation arranged
- \_\_\_\_\_ Food/Meals arranged
- \_\_\_\_\_ Distribute Equipment List, Health Form, and Liability Release to each participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contact ETC no less than 7 days prior to trip to confirm group size and trip plans
- \_\_\_\_\_ Final Balance submitted no less than 7 days prior to trip
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete & submit the "Special Needs Trip Roster" no less than 7 days prior to trip
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health & Liability Release Forms signed for each participant and staff



### **For All Activities**

- Be able to manage all personal care and mobility independently or with the assistance of a friend, family member, or attendant (see Personal Care Attendant Policy below)
- Be able to breathe independently, not require medical devices to sustain breathing
- Perceive, understand and respond to commands given by a guide independently or with the assistance of an interpreter
- Be able to effectively signal or notify guides or other trip participants of personal distress, injury or need for assistance
- If taking prescription medications, be able to maintain proper dosage by medicating independently or with the assistance of a personal care attendant or staff member
- Be prepared to participate in physically strenuous activities that may require physical ability beyond what many people are accustomed to in their day-to-day lives
- For overnight trips, be able to move about the campsite or building independently or with the assistance of a companion, on trips that include overnight camping
- Be able to remain adequately hydrated, fed, and properly dressed so as to remain generally healthy and be able to avoid environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat-related illness, sunburn and frostbite
- Be able to wear all safety equipment correctly such as, but not limited to, helmet, spray skirts, or personal flotation device
- Be comfortable traveling in remote settings where access to advanced medical care may be significantly delayed

### **For Whitewater Rafting Trips**

- Minimum Age: 10 years old
- Minimum Weight: 60 pounds
- Independently turn from face down to face up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted personal flotation device (life jacket)
- Remain seated and balanced in a floating raft with the use of adaptive equipment, if necessary. Adaptive equipment cannot impede or lessen the effectiveness of the safety procedures or equipment. No one may be strapped or belted into a watercraft.
- Be able to spend extended time in outdoor environments, where the air temperature can exceed 100 degrees F and the water temperature may be below 55 degrees F. During the trip there may also be exposure to wind, precipitation, uninterrupted sun.



ETC guides are trained in making our adventures adaptive, (including assisting with transfers in and out of kayaks and rafts and getting around camp), but they are not trained personal care attendants. Many participants with disabilities find that they need more support in the less familiar environments of our trips than they do at home.

ETC's overnight trips are usually camping trips, and some only have portable toilets and buckets for washing that are set up each night (i.e., no running water). ETC provides tents and cots for those who need them. You will need to be able to get into your tent and on and off either a cot or the ground on your own. Also, you will also need to be able to do your own toileting, washing, and dressing.

If you think that you will need assistance with any of the following: toileting, eating, taking medicines, dressing, and getting in/out of bed, ETC asks that you bring a personal care attendant with you. ETC does not want the additional cost of bringing an attendant to hinder you from being able to take part in our trips, so we offer scholarships and special pricing for attendants.



We look forward to sharing an ETC adventure with your group. Below is a list of Terms and Conditions for your trip booking:

### **Reservations and Cancellations**

- A deposit for 50% of the total trip cost is required 2 weeks after the booking date to secure the reservation.
- Cancellations made 90 days or more prior to the trip date will receive a full refund.
- Cancellations made 60-89 days prior to the trip will receive a credit for the deposit amount which can be applied to any ETC trip within one year of the original trip date.
- Cancellations made 59 days or less prior to the trip date are not refundable unless special accommodations are made in advance with the ETC Office.
- The trip balance is due no later than 7 days prior to the trip date.

### **Trip Numbers and Cancellations**

- A minimum of 10 people is required for any trip. If your group does not meet the trip minimum, you will still be charged for 10 people.
- If the number of participants increases less than 7 days prior to the trip, this must first be approved by the appropriate ETC Program Manager and the group will then be charged for the added participants.
- If the number of participants drops less than 7 days prior to the trip, the group will still be charged for those spaces and no refund will be issued.
- ETC reserves the right to cancel the trip due to weather conditions, tide/current conditions, water level, or for other unforeseen reasons. If ETC cancels the trip, the trip payment will be refunded in full.

### **Transportation**

- ETC does not provide transportation to or from the program location.
- Transportation during whitewater rafting trips can be arranged at an additional fee.

### **Medical**

All participants must complete a Health Form, which must be signed by the participant or the participant's parent or guardian if he or she is under the age of 18. ETC works to accommodate people with special needs, though we reserve the right to exclude or remove someone from a trip at any time if doing so is related to the safety of the trip. Participants or agency staff will be responsible for the administration of any medications they may take regularly. ETC Guides are never to be responsible for the administration of a prescription medication.

### **Liability**

Due to the nature of the activity, a condition of participation is the completion of a Liability Release acknowledging the inherent risks of the trip activities. This form must be signed by the participant or the participant's parent or guardian if he or she is under the age of 18. Participants who refuse to sign the liability release will not be allowed to participate.

**Payment of your trip deposit indicates that you agree to the above Terms and Conditions.**



## Whitewater Rafting Trip Equipment List

### **Rafting Attire:**

- One pair of shorts and/or bathing suit. No jeans on the river!
- One T-shirt
- Sunhat (baseball cap or visor is best)
- Sunglasses with a retention strap
- Shoes that can get wet and will stay on feet (old tennis shoes, sport sandals, wetsuit booties)
- A change of clothes for after the trip

### **Other Personal Items:**

- Sunscreen
- Lip balm with sun protection (SPF)
- Water bottle with secure lid

### **Additional Items for Camping**

- One pair of long pants
- One pair of shorts
- One T-Shirt
- One long sleeve shirt
- Underwear
- Sweater or lightweight jacket
- Socks
- Dry shoes (good for hiking/walking)
- Warm jacket
- Warm Hat
- Personal toilet articles
- Small towel
- Small flashlight
- Toiletry items
- Prescription medications (if you take any)
- Prescription eyeglasses (if you have them)
- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping pad
- Tent (if camping before mid-June or after August)

### **Optional Accessories:**

- Camera
- Binoculars
- Small Games
- Musical Instrument

# Whitewater Rafting Program

## Driving Directions

### For GPS Navigation Systems use:

6700 Highway 49  
Lotus, CA. 95651

### Approximate Driving times:

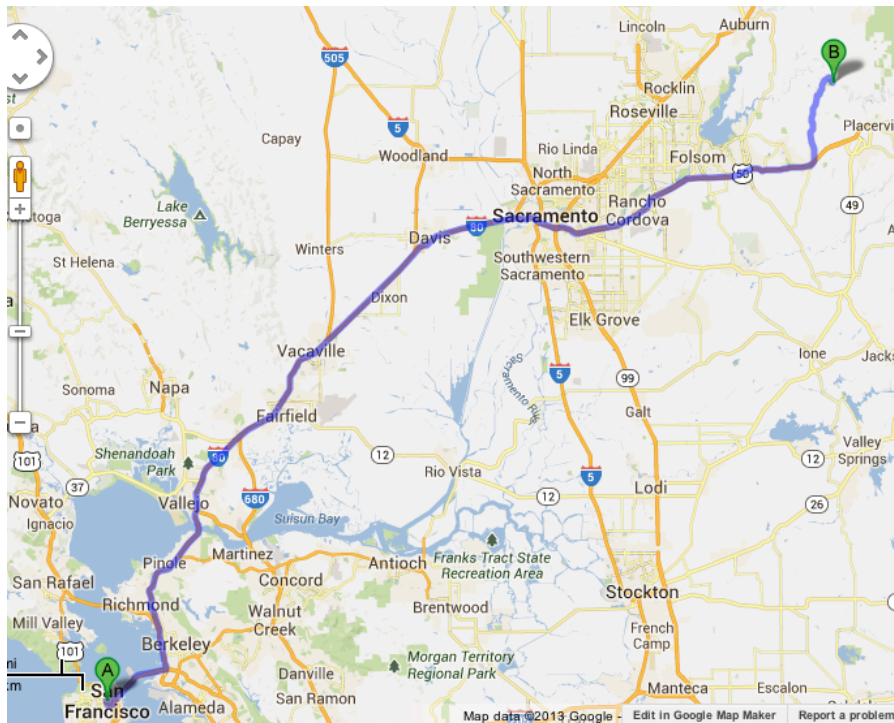
- San Francisco Bay Area: 3 hours
- Sacramento: 1.5 hours

### Driving Directions:

- Take Highway 80 East to Sacramento.
- Take 50 East towards South Lake Tahoe and Placerville for approximately 31 miles.
- Take the Ponderosa Road exit.
- Turn **left** at the stoplight onto South Shingle Springs Road/Ponderosa Road and cross over the Freeway.
- Turn **right** onto North Shingle Road, towards Coloma and Lotus.
- Continue for approximately 11 miles (the road will change names from North Shingle Springs, to Grass Valley Road, to Lotus Road) until the road comes to a T at Highway 49.
- Turn **left** onto Highway 49 (you will cross the river and pass through the town of Coloma).
- The ETC camp is located approximately 1 mile north of Coloma on the left hand side of Highway 49.

The Camp is marked by two tall telephone poles with a gate in between and a large blue sign that reads Environmental Traveling Companions (the street address can't be seen from the road). If you pass River's Bend Camp, you have gone too far.

**If you get lost or are running late, please call our staff at the ETC River Camp at (530) 642-8189**



For more information, please contact the River Program Manager at 415-474-7662 ext. 15 or [riverprogram@etctrips.org](mailto:riverprogram@etctrips.org)





## River Program Instructions for Health and Liability Forms

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Following this page are two forms that must be completed by all participants, including any agency staff. The first is a Health Form and the second is a Liability Release. Please remember the following guidelines when filling out these forms:

- Separate forms are required for each participant. Participants in the same family or household cannot use the same forms.
- Please complete these forms using blue or black ink.
- **It is very important that both forms are filled out completely. Please do not leave any field blank unless the question does not apply to you. Participants will only be allowed to participate if they have forms that are completely filled out.**
- For participants under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must sign both forms.
- Please do not return these forms to ETC in advance of your trip. Instead, please bring them with you on the day of the trip and ETC Guides will collect them from you upon your arrival.
- If you have any questions or concerns about a medical condition or your ability to participate on an ETC trip, please do not hesitate to contact the River Program Manager at 415-474-7662 x15 or at [riverprogram@etctrips.org](mailto:riverprogram@etctrips.org) in advance of the trip date.
- Spanish versions and accessible type-friendly PDF versions of these forms are available upon request.

Thank you very much for your assistance!

Agency/Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Trip Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Trip:  Sea Kayaking  Cross-Country Skiing  Whitewater Rafting

### Environmental Traveling Companions Health Form

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Your Medical Insurance Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Contact Alternate Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Disability (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Medication:

Name of Medication	Dosage	Schedule	Reason for Medication

Dietary Restrictions \_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate if you currently have or previously had any of the following conditions. For any "YES" responses, please provide specific details on the right side of this section:**

1. NO YES Any problems with vision or hearing? Do you require glasses, hearing aid?
2. NO YES Problems with teeth - use of dentures, bridge or braces?
3. NO YES Dizzy spells, fainting, convulsions, persistent headaches?
4. NO YES Asthma or respiratory problems?
5. NO YES Palpitation of the heart, irregular heartbeat, heart murmurs?
6. NO YES Jaundice or hepatitis?
7. NO YES Broken bones, joint dislocations, serious sprains?
8. NO YES Any severe injury to head, chest, or internal organs?
9. NO YES Allergies to any specific drugs, foods, insect bites, bees? Please list: \_\_\_\_\_
10. NO YES History of diabetes, thyroid trouble, heart disease?
11. NO YES Other significant medical or neurologic disorders?
12. NO YES Do you smoke?
13. NO YES Any special accommodations for toileting?

**By checking this box, I agree that I have reviewed ETC's Essential Eligibility Criteria for Participation and feel that I meet these criteria.**

I hereby acknowledge ETC to administer First Aid and/or emergency medical treatment and/or secure such medical services that may be necessary for myself or any minor on whose behalf I am signing. I realize that any emergency or medication that may become necessary are the sole responsibility of the participant.

**By signing this release I agree that I have read it carefully, agree with its terms, and I sign it of my own free will.**

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of participant or parent or guardian if participant is under 18)

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here if you do not want your photo used in ETC publications or outreach.

## PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT, RELEASE, AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

In consideration of the services of Environmental Traveling Companions, their agents, owners, officers, volunteers, employees, and all other persons or entities acting in any capacity on their behalf (hereinafter collectively referred to as "ETC"), I hereby agree to release, indemnify, and discharge ETC, on behalf of myself, my children, my parents, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that my participation in the following guided activities: hiking, camping, backpacking, river rafting, skiing, and kayaking activities entails known and unanticipated risks that could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to myself, to property, or to third parties. I understand that such risks simply cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity.

**The risks include, among other things:** slips and falls; being struck by rock fall or other objects dislodged or thrown from above; pinches, scrapes, twists and jolts that could result in cuts, scratches, bruises, sprains, lacerations, fractures, or concussions; hazards of walking on uneven terrain; water hazards; canoe or kayak entrapment; accidental drowning; capsizes or entrapment; whitewater rapids will be encountered; collision with fixed or moveable objects or other watercraft; being jolted, jarred, bounce, and shaken during rides; contact with food boxes, other storage containers, or other fixed equipment necessary to the operation of the expedition and the outfitting of the raft; "washed" overboard resulting in having to swim rapids risking collision with rocks and entanglement in trees; musculoskeletal injuries including head, neck, and back injuries; exposure to temperature and weather extremes which could cause cold water shock, hyperthermia (heat related illnesses), heat exhaustion, sunburn, dehydration; strong wind, cold, storms, large waves, eddies, whirlpools, and lightning; exposure to potentially dangerous wild animals, insect bites, and hazardous plant life; loss or damage to equipment being used; equipment failure and/or operator error; improper lifting or carrying; being lost or separated from their guides or companions; the negligence of participants, or other persons who may be present; accidents or illness can occur in remote places without medical facilities and emergency treatment or other services rendered; consumption of food or drink; my own physical condition, and the physical exertion associated with this activity.

Furthermore, ETC personnel have difficult jobs to perform. They seek safety, but they are not infallible. They might be unaware of a participant's fitness or abilities. They might misjudge the weather, other environmental conditions. They may give incomplete warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction.

2. I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in this activity. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the risks. Additionally, I agree to wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (life jacket) while participating in water activities.

3. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless ETC from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity or my use of ETC's equipment or facilities, **including any such claims which allege negligent acts or omissions of ETC.**

4. Should ETC or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.

5. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may cause or suffer while participating, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I am willing to assume the risk of any medical or physical condition I may have. In the event of my death or incapacity, this agreement shall be effective and binding upon my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators, assignees and representatives.

6. In the event that I file a lawsuit against ETC, I agree to do so solely in the state of California, and I further agree that the substantive law of that state shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state. I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect.

**I hereby release, waive, and relinquish all claims and legal actions for personal injury, wrongful death or property damage against the U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Reclamation ("U.S. Government), State of California, its department of Parks and Recreation ("State") or its permittees arising as a result of my participation in the whitewater river trips and related activities described herein, my use of permittee's equipment, or any activities incidental there to include rescue activities; This release applies even if permittee and/or state and/or U.S. Government are negligent or otherwise at fault. I also agree to protect, hold harmless, defend and indemnify permittee, state and U.S. Government and hold them harmless from all claims and legal actions for personal injury, death, or property damage arising from my conduct; these indemnities apply even if permittee, state and U.S. Government are negligent or otherwise at fault.**

**By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against ETC on the basis of any claim from which I have released them herein. I also agree that this document is valid for subsequent visits and participation at ETC.**

**I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms.**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S ADDITIONAL INDEMNIFICATION (Must be completed for participants under the age of 18)

In consideration of the following minor(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (clearly print Minor's or Minors' name(s)) being permitted by ETC to participate in its activities and to use its equipment and facilities, I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless ETC from any and all claims which are brought by, or on behalf of Minor(s), and which are in any way connected with such use or participation by Minor(s).

Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_