

Leave No Trace Master Educator Course Mad Dog Expedition (Flatwater), Southern IL Course Description

- Duration: 5 days
- Dates: May 17-21, 2021
- Cost: \$525
- Location: Touch of Nature Environmental Center and environs, S. IL
- Meeting time and location: TBD

Course Overview

The Master Educator course is an extensive experience designed to immerse participants in Leave No Trace skills and ethics through hands on practice and teaching. The course provides participants with a comprehensive overview of Leave No Trace techniques through practical application in a backcountry setting. Students who successfully graduate from this course will receive a certificate and will be qualified to offer and teach two-day Leave No Trace Trainer courses as well as shorter Awareness Workshops.

During five days of training within Touch of Nature Environmental Center property, Shawnee National Forest, Crab Orchard Wildlife Refuge, Little Grassy Lake and Devils Kitchen Lake, participants will learn and teach the principles of Leave No Trace while immersing themselves in the outdoors. These natural and wild areas provide an ideal setting for exploring and discussing outdoor ethics, front country issues, and backcountry Leave No Trace principles.

The course will involve teaching and practicing Leave No Trace skills and ethics while paddling, hiking, portaging, and camping in these natural areas. Participants do not need to be expert paddlers but prior paddling and backcountry experience is required. **The Master Educator course does not cover skills related to backcountry camping or paddling.**

This is a great opportunity for educators, naturalists, park rangers, recreation planners, scout leaders and anyone that works, or would like to work, in the outdoor industry to improve their Leave No Trace teaching skills while experiencing the unique treasures found in Southern Illinois.

Course Agenda (subject to change)

This agenda gives an overview of a typical course progression. Topics will be added or changed depending on final enrollment numbers, and the agenda is subject to change. Activities are dependent on terrain, course size and weather.

Day One

Instructor and participant introductions
Introduction to the Master Educator course and history of Leave No Trace
Goals and objectives of Master Educator course and Trainer course
Personal goals of the group
Principles of education

Day Two

Principle One – Plan Ahead and Prepare
Principle Two – Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
Activity – Exploring Campsite Selection
Principle Three – Dispose of Waste Properly
Activity – Exploring Trash Disposal
Discuss “Authority of the Resource”
Introduce “Action Plans”

Day Three

Principle Four – Leave What You Find
Activity – Exploring Natural Areas and Archeological Areas
Principle Five – Minimize Campfire Impact
Activity – Exploring Fires and Stoves
Principle Six – Respect Wildlife
Activity – Exploring Respect for Wildlife
Cover all Trainer course materials

Day Four

Principle Seven – Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Activity – How to Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Wildland Ethics

Share and discuss “Action Plans”

Day Five

How to run a Trainer course

Course evaluations

Final thoughts and debrief

Graduation, Depart

Curriculum

The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics has designated Touch of Nature Environmental Center an educational provider of Master Educator courses. Touch of Nature Environmental Center brings over 65 years of experience teaching wilderness skills, interpretation and leadership to the Leave No Trace program.

Master Educator courses are informative, practical, hands-on and fun. You will learn skills and teaching techniques through lectures, activities and discussions in a spectacular outdoor setting. The course is designed for people who actively teach outdoor skills to others or provide recreation information to the public. It emphasizes three components:

- low-impact camping skills
- wildland ethics
- outdoor teaching techniques

Participant Lessons

Each participant will be required to present a 15-20 minute lesson on one of the Leave No Trace principles or how it relates to a specific activity, such as backpacking, canoeing/kayaking or mountain biking. The lesson may be skills-oriented or theoretical in content. Although some preparation time will be available once the course has begun, plan to prepare your lesson prior to arriving at Touch of Nature. As a component of the class the participant is also required to conduct a short (5-10 minutes) activity.

If you have questions regarding class presentations, please refer to the teaching information on the LNT website www.lnt.org or contact Touch of Nature Environmental Center at <https://ton.siu.edu/> or call 618-453-1121.

Environment

Touch of Nature Environmental Center sits on 3,100 acres of the unglaciated Shawnee Hills natural division of the Shawnee National Forest. The Eastern border of the facility is Little Grassy Lake, one of three lakes on Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge. It shares its Southern and Western borders with Giant City State Park and Crab Orchard Wilderness. A National Environmental Education Landmark (designated by the National Park Service) and outdoor laboratory for Southern Illinois University, Touch of Nature has been serving a broad range of populations as a leader in the fields of environmental, therapeutic and adventure education for over 65 years. Southern Illinois is known for its lush hills, diverse ecosystems, sandstone cliffs and numerous lakes.

Southern Illinois is home to a variety of plants and animals. The forests are primarily hardwood oak-hickory but also contain maple, walnut, ash and beech among many others. There is a plethora of animals in Southern Illinois and participants may see anything from deer, bobcat, fox, beaver and otter to hawks, eagles, egret and heron.

Weather in Southern Illinois varies from season to season and is generally unpredictable. May through September are hot and humid with the average high temperature in the 80's. October through November are cooler with the average high in the 60's. The winter months, December through February, may be very cold or rather mild with temperature ranging from single digits up to the 50's. March through April are pleasant with the average high in the 60's.

Camping

Camping on this expedition will be in a backcountry setting either at designated campsites (near lakes, shelter bluffs). There are no facilities or trash receptacles and all trash must be packed out. No glass bottles or containers are allowed on the lake or at camps. Fires must be contained within the fire ring, grill, stove or other device. Participants will be at a different camping location each night and all gear will need to be stored properly.

Equipment

Touch of Nature Environmental Center will provide canoes, personal floatation devices and paddles for all participants.

Participants are required to provide their own personal gear. Plan for a variety of weather, from warm and sunny to cool and windy. A detailed equipment list will be emailed to the participants prior to the course.

If needed Touch of Nature Environmental Center will rent certain, specific equipment items to clients for a cost. Costs will cover the entire duration of the course. All items must be returned in good condition.

Food

Participants are required to provide their own food (appropriate for backcountry setting)

Enrollment Forms

All participants will need to register for the Master Educator course online at <https://ton.siu.edu/>

- Self-Screening Medical Form
- Insurance Form - all course participants must have some form of medical insurance
- Student Agreement

All payments and enrollment forms should be sent to:

Touch of Nature Environmental Center/LNT
1206 Touch of Nature Road
Makanda, Illinois 62958

Scholarships

For information regarding Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics scholarships go to <https://lnt.org/teach/master-educator-course-scholarships> or contact the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics for details at 800-332-4100.

Additional Information

The Leave No Trace Master Educator Course **does not** cover backcountry or paddling skills. Participants must be familiar with the use of stoves, backcountry cooking, tent setup, clothing selection, water filters, etc., as well as portaging and flatwater canoeing skills. Participants should have at least 20 or more days of backcountry experience and an additional 20 or more days of paddling experience. For more information or questions please contact Touch of Nature Environmental Center at 618-453-1121 or <https://ton.siu.edu/>.

Payment and Cancellation Policies - Please read carefully!

Course tuition is \$525 and includes a one-year individual membership to Leave No Trace, instruction, group equipment, some meals and educational materials. Partial scholarships are available through the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. Please contact the Center for details 800-332-4100.

To enroll, a completed application and a \$100 non-refundable deposit are required. The balance of tuition is due 45 days prior to the course start date. For applications within 45 days of the course start date, tuition is due in full with the application.

*The \$100 deposit may be waived for scholarship applicants until the scholarship amount has been determined.

Cancellation Policy

If you cancel or leave for any reason we will retain the non-refundable deposit or the following percentage of tuition, whichever is greater:

- Between 15 and 29 days prior to the course start date, Touch of Nature Environmental Center will retain 25 percent of the course tuition
- Between 8 and 14 days prior to the course start date, Touch of Nature Environmental Center will retain 50 percent of the course tuition
- Less than 8 days prior to the course start date or after the course has begun, there will be no refunds

Course transfer requests may incur a \$25 processing fee.