Hello Rossin’ and a Rollin’ Scramblers!

Welcome! We are so excited that you have chosen one of the backpack & canoe combo Scrambles, and we can’t wait to meet you all. This trip will be led by Betsey Olk, Silas Morgan and Hannah Klaeser. We plan on showing you an amazing time in some of the most gorgeous wilderness that the Pacific Northwest offers. All of your leaders are Wilderness First Responders or Wilderness EMTs, and all three have a variety of experience in the backcountry. Now here’s a little more info about each of your leaders:

Betsey is a Junior Environmental Studies-Sociology major from the great state of Minnesota. She loves swimming, hiking, singing, baking bread, knitting, bird watching, dancing, and playing in the sun. Betsey has been on many canoe trips in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, in Canada’s Quetico and Crownland Wildernesses and beyond! She’s spending her summer raising ducks and keeping bees on a farm in Central Minnesota. Betsey is SO STOKED for this Scramble and will challenge any of you to a game of cribbage.

Silas is a sophomore from sunny Portland, Oregon. He is attempting a double major in Rhetoric and Geology. In his spare time Silas races bikes for the Whitman team, tries to read as much as he can, and escape the concrete jungle whenever possible. Silas grew up hiking, biking, rafting, climbing, and mountaineering with his biologist father and close friends. He is spending the summer backpacking through much of Western Washington with a friend before donning his backpack once again to help lead your first experience as Whitman students. He couldn’t be more excited to get to know all of you while lounging along the banks of beautiful Ross Lake.

Last, but not least, is Hannah from the faraway land of Chicago. Despite being surrounded by high rises and suburbia, Hannah loves the outdoors. From the Brooks Range in Alaska to the Beartooths of Montana, Hannah has spent many-a-day off-trail backpacking through the woods. Hannah has recently rediscovered her love for canoeing and has spent the last two summers leading six day canoe trips for Camp Manitowish YMCA. Hannah will be a Junior Biology major with minors in French and Chemistry and is incredibly excited to make massive amounts of mac-and-cheese on our scramble.

Trip Logistics:

On August 18th, we’ll meet at 2:15 pm in the Ballroom of Reid Campus Center with the rest of the Scramblers, leaders, and parents to introduce ourselves and go over personal gear, group gear, food, medical forms, etc. If you reserved essential items such as a sleeping bag or rain jacket to rent from the Outdoor Program Rental Shop, we will be going to pick those things up. We will go over packing as a group and everyone will have the chance to put any belongings into storage that they will not need during Scrambles. Storage will not open up again until the morning of the 27th when Orientation begins.

We will spend the night of the 18th in Walla Walla with our fellow Scramblers and plan to leave early the next morning. Most of day two will be spent driving to North Cascades National Park where we will stay the night at a campground before embarking on our wilderness adventure the next morning!

Day three and four (August 20th and 21th, respectively) we plan to hike up the western side of the lake, averaging about 6 miles a day, with numerous snack stops during the day. Then we spend two nights around Lightning Creek and Cat Island as we make the boat exchange with the Scramble coming up the lake. Day five, depending on the group and weather, there might be an
optional day hike up Mount Desolation, which is about 14 miles. Then we transition to the lake on August 23rd and 24th and plan on about 6-8 miles of paddling a day as we head back down. If the lake holds true to form, however, the wind will hopefully be at our back and we will be cruising.

On August 25th we will beach our boats in the early afternoon and start driving back towards Whitman! We plan to camp mid-way to Whitman to cut our driving time the next day. We will be back on campus on the afternoon of the 26th to clean and return gear, unpack, shower, and join the Scramble picnic at 6 pm.

Enclosed is a recommended packing list for the trip. If you intend to rent anything from the OP, we strongly recommend reserving your items ahead of time, since many other Scramblers will be renting as well. We’ll be living on and around water for a week, so make sure that the shoes you bring for wearing during the paddling day can get wet and will also protect your feet. Chacos, Tevas, Crocs, old tennis shoes, or even hiking boots are all good choices, while flip-flops are unacceptable (since they can fall off). Hiking boots are required for the backpacking portion and can be rented from the OP if you don’t have a pair already.

To note: August weather is notoriously unpredictable, so be prepared for the extremes! While it will probably be hot and sunny, we are just as likely to experience rain and cold nights, so bring warm, insulating layers made of wool or synthetic materials that will keep you warm even when wet. Avoid bringing cotton clothing, as it is heavy and dries slowly (this means no jeans and sweatshirts!).

Have any burning questions about the trip or college in general? Feel free to contact us during the summer! But seriously, do not hesitate to call us if you have any questions at all. We have all been through the process of moving out ourselves and would love to help.

As a final note, please fill out the Travel Plans Google Form https://goo.gl/nF1zwH (also available on the Scrambler Resources Page) so we know when and how you will be arriving in Walla Walla. This form lets us know if you will need to be picked up, or if we will need to work with you on a place to stay if you arrive early.

Let the adventures begin!

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