

Wind River Ranch

Student Handbook

Welcome to Wind River Ranch! We hope that your stay here will be rich with learning and community. In order to support your entry into Wind River Ranch life, we offer this handbook full of pertinent answers to your questions, even the ones you didn't know you had! Please read the manual carefully as many key components to your stay are discussed. If you have any questions or concerns we are happy to assist.

Campus:

The Wind River Ranch is at 7,000 feet elevation. It is located about 20 miles north of Las Vegas, NM, and 5 miles west of Watrous, NM, on Interstate 25. Take exit # 364, which brings you to State Highway 161. Go under the overpass for Interstate 25 and head west on Highway 161 for 5.5 miles. The ranch gate is almost directly across the road from Mile Marker 16. The gate has two white, wooden posts and a white, wooden cross-piece with a black W on top. The gate will be closed, but not locked. **Please close the gate behind you. We have a herd of bison.**

Weather:

We are in a semi-arid, high-altitude climate, so come prepared for high, dry heat in the summer and cold, snowy winters. The first frost usually hits in early November, and spring planting begins in mid-April. Drink lots of water and stay hydrated.

Las Vegas:

Las Vegas is a town of 15,000 located about 65 miles north and east of Santa Fe by following Interstate 25 north from Santa Fe. In town there are many amenities, including two coffee shops, a health food store (Semillas), two Lowe's supermarkets, a movie theatre, several bakeries, art galleries, and many good restaurants. Las Vegas is the home of New Mexico Highlands University, Luna community College, and the United World College. The latter is a high school for juniors and seniors based on international education. There are 250 students from 90 countries attending it.

Residential Life:

We ask that you be considerate of the many functions of the ranch. Your primary staff contact will be the Residential Assistant, who will facilitate community meetings, grocery shopping, peer mediation, daily chores and all other needs.

Housing:

Camping is easy and glorious here. Students must bring their own tents and bedding. We also permit small campers and RVs, less than 22' long; we have electrical hookup in the headquarters area. We will not allow generators. There is plenty of camping space near the Learning Center in the headquarters area, and there is also a campground at the west end of the ranch. The campground has a hand-pump on the well and an outhouse over a septic tank. If you choose to stay off campus, there are numerous motels in Las Vegas.

Library/Office:

The library is in the office (headquarters area) and is open for student use. There are also two desk-top computers that have a satellite connection, and there is also a wireless connection to the satellite. The telephone is available for outgoing calls with a phone card and emergency incoming calls only (Emergency number: 505-425-1819). This phone is both our personal number and the ranch number. There will be no cell phone service in the canyon, but it is possible to get service outside of the canyon. The best cell phone service comes from Singular.

Kitchen & Meals:

On class days, whole food meals are prepared by rotating student groups. The cost of these meals is included in tuition. The students make their own special meal plans with the Residential Assistant to ensure that everyone's needs are met.

Your instructor(s), Wind River Ranch staff, and guests may join you for lunch. Please always let the Residential Assistant know of additional mouths-to-feed ahead of time. Our indoor kitchen is under construction. We ask that you keep the kitchen facilities clean at all times.

Showers:

There is a shower available at the Learning Center in the headquarters area. Students also may bring their own solar shower bags, and we will make arrangements for these. Shower bags are the only option in the campground at the west end of the ranch. Shower bags can be ordered online at www.realgoods.com. They are listed online as "Solar shower 4 gallon" and cost about \$15. This is a simple bag that warms in the sun and is then hoisted for showering. Due to the solar nature of this setup, you will most likely find the afternoon or early evening the most pleasant time to bathe.

Toilets:

There is an indoor toilet available at the Learning Center, and an outhouse at the campground on the west end of the ranch. Please throw toilet paper into the available waste can, and not into the septic system.

Laundry:

There is a Laundromat available in town. There are not laundry facilities at the ranch.

Transportation & Parking:

There are usually a few students with personal cars. During field trips these students may be asked to carpool. Students are expected to self-organize traveling details and expense-sharing.

Pets:

No pets are allowed on campus in order to protect the wildlife and farm animals.