



Sustainable Settings *Harvesting Nature's Intelligence*

Student Handbook

Welcome to Sustainable Settings! We hope that your stay here will be rich with learning and community. In order to support your entry into Sustainable Settings 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:

Sustainable Settings, established in 1997, is a high-altitude semi-arid research and demonstration ranch and Whole Systems Learning Center designed to focus community life around meaningful and environmentally sustainable practices. This 244-acre demonstration site is based on universally applicable principles of ecologically aware design and practice that can be readily replicated elsewhere. Sustainable Settings is at 6,500 feet elevation, located under 12,969 ft. elev. Mount Sopris, five miles south of Carbondale and 35 miles northwest of Aspen, Colorado, USA.

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 late November, and spring planting begins in mid-March. Drinking lots of water and eating more leafy greens can help the blood adjust to the thinner air of more than a mile above sea level.

Carbondale:

Carbondale is 5 miles north of Sustainable Settings: a 5 minute drive, and a 30 minute bike ride. In town there are many amenities, including a coffee shop, a small co-op, a supermarket, movie theatre, organic bakery, the valley's best pizza place, many good Mexican restaurants from haute cuisine to authentic Mexican, and a Laundromat.

Residential Life:

For Intensive Courses, we strongly encourage you live on campus to reap the most benefit from your time here, and strengthen the student-staff community, which is a substantial component of these courses. In addition, there are predictable class disruptions when a student arrives late or must leave early due to other obligations. Non-residential students have typically expressed that their experience would have been richer had they chosen to live on campus.

There are many activities going on simultaneously on Sustainable Settings: Volunteer Days, Market Garden Harvesting, and daily ranch chores and projects. We all share this space, and we ask that you be considerate of the many functions of the facility. 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 in the 120 year heirloom apple orchard, garden spots, and around the historic settlement log cabins. Students must bring their own tents and bedding. We also permit small campers and RVs, less than 22' long; we have electrical hookup, but do not allow generators. If you choose to stay off campus, there is a Days Inn Motel in Carbondale, and many more in Glenwood Springs. There are also nearby Bed and Breakfasts.

Library/Office:

The library is open for student use; there is a wireless server available for internet use. The library is in the Office. The telephone is available for outgoing calls with a phone card and emergency incoming calls only (Emergency number: 970-963-6107). There is also a Verizon wireless signal here.

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), Sustainable Settings 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. A lovely outdoor kitchen run on solar power and exiting to a grey water system is available for everyone's use. The outdoor kitchen is located in the orchard and is a beautiful place to prepare and enjoy meals. We ask that you keep the kitchen facilities clean at all times.

Showers:

There is a GREAT 40 gallon batch solar hot water collector/shower with cedar deck, privacy screens, and a miser shower head on it. Students also may bring their own solar shower bags, and we will make arrangements for these. These 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.

Our shower water is reused on the land. ***Please use only biodegradable toiletries while here, such as Dr. Bronner's and Nature's Gate.*** Synthetic insect repellent, non-biodegradable soaps, shampoos, lotions, etc. will damage the ecosystem. Visit your local natural foods store or ask the Sustainable Settings staff for help finding suitable products.

Toilets:

There is a sawdust-flush composting toilet for student use. They are very simple to use, clean and odor-free, and they save a lot of potable water. The humanure is later composted and fed to the fruit trees.

Laundry:

There is a Laundromat available in town; we have a laundry line here, and handwashing is available.

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.

Cell phones:

There is Verizon service here; please be respectful of others with cellular phones by using them in private spaces whenever possible.