Ram Connect: Wilderness Beginning Your Adventure Guide

Check-In
Check-in for the program will take place in the Outdoor Programs area of the Campus Recreation Center from 12:00-12:30p.m. on the first day of your scheduled program. Those ending an Orientation Day 2 program will simply come to the Campus Recreation Center after completing course registration.

Getting Here
The Student Recreation Center is on the main CSU campus in Fort Collins, Colorado. Fort Collins, CO is located 60 miles north of Denver and 50 miles south of Cheyenne, WY just west of I-25.

You will be receiving parking information via email two weeks before your program start date. Parking will be in the same location as your orientation session parking.

Click here to see CSU’s interactive campus map to see updates about construction and explore alternate routes into campus.

Waiver/Medical History Forms
Download and complete your medical history/waiver forms (which you will receive via email two weeks before your Ram Connect session) and return it to Orientation and Transition Programs at check-in.

* These forms are required for you to participate in Ram Connect: Wilderness.

Lodging/Meals
Campsite registration and use fees are included in the cost of registration. You will be camping at various places in Rocky Mountain National Park and Colorado’s Front Range.

Please eat lunch before coming for check-in and plan to eat lunch on your own after we return on the last day of the program. All other meals will be provided. If you have any special dietary needs, please update your program registration to reflect those needs.
**Gear CSU Will Provide:**
- Backpack (up to 5000 cubic inches)
- Trekking poles
- Pack cover (large plastic bag)
- Sleeping bag (20 F is adequate)
- Foam pad
- Tents/shelter
- Water purification chemical and/or filter
- Small trowel or shovel
- Collapsible water containers
- Stove, stove fuel and maintenance kit
- Pots and pot grippers
- General First Aid Kit (participants should provide their own basics, such as ibuprofen & Band-Aids)

**Gear Students Must Provide:**
Most clothing should be synthetic materials (quick drying, moisture wicking). Cotton is rarely a good choice for extended time in the backcountry.
- Large duffel for storing personal gear during on-campus Ram Orientation (60-90L)
- Underwear
- Base layers – top & bottoms
- T-shirt(s)
- Shorts
- Medium weight shirt
- Fleece sweater or equivalent
- Stocking cap
- Sun hat with brim or visor

**Gear Students Must Provide, Cont’d:**
- Long pants or equivalent (note: you will NOT be allowed to participate in “blue jeans”)
- Lighter down jacket (optional but recommended)
- Waterproof rain jacket (Gore-Tex or equivalent)
- Waterproof rain pants (Gore-Tex or equivalent, not required but recommended)
- Lightweight gloves or mittens
- 2 pairs of socks that work with your boots (heavy wool or synthetic)
- Hiking boots or sturdy hiking shoes (lightweight, waterproof)
- Camp shoes or sandals (optional)
- Pocket knife (optional)
- Small bowl, mug, spoon
- 2 water bottles (1 liter wide-mouth are best)
- Small headlamp (fresh batteries or bring extra)
- Sunscreen (the stronger the better)
- Sunglasses
- Lip balm with SPF sun protection
- Toothbrush, paste, floss
- Comb or brush (optional)
- Hand sanitizer (small amount)
- Toilet paper
- Period products with plastic Ziploc or coffee bag containers for disposal
- Small towel (optional)
What does Ram Connect: Wilderness look like?

Sample Schedule

**Day 1**
12:00 p.m. Check-In at Campus Recreation Center
2:00 p.m. Leave Campus for Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP)
5:00 p.m. Arrive at Long Draw Reservoir Trailhead
7:30 p.m. Arrive at Ditch Camp Ground Site (3.5mi hike)
8:00 p.m. Dinner/Set Up Camp
9:00 p.m. Evening Activities
10:30 p.m. Bed

**Day 2**
6:30 a.m. Wake Up
7:00 a.m. Breakfast
8:00 a.m. Lake of the Clouds Day hike
6:00 p.m. Dinner at Campsite
7:00 p.m. Evening Activities
10:30 p.m. Bed

**Day 3**
6:30 a.m. Wake Up
7:00 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 a.m. Lulu Mountain Summit or summit of nearby peak
6:00 p.m. Dinner at Campsite
7:00 p.m. Evening Activities
10:30 p.m. Bed

**Day 4**
6:30 a.m. Wake Up/Breakfast/Pack Up Campsite
7:00 a.m. Depart Ditch Camp Group Site
10:00 a.m. Arrive at Long Draw Trailhead
12:00 p.m. Arrive at CSU Campus

At check-in, participants will meet their Outdoor Trip Instructors who will be leading the group through all of the activities and adventures. Ram Connect: Wilderness is an incredibly small program with only 8 participants, so you will have the opportunity to make deep connections with the other trip participants!

The schedule to the left was the 2019 Ram Connect: Wilderness Schedule. Though the structure of the program is the same, specific details/locations may change. You will receive a final schedule two weeks before departure.
Who are the leaders?
Trained students from the Outdoor Programs Office and from CSU’s Orientation and Transition Programs will be your leaders for the trip.

All outdoor adventure activities will be led by qualified staff skilled in wilderness leadership, facilitation of positive group dynamics, and First Aid/CPR.

What exactly is Ram Connect: Wilderness?
Ram Connect: Wilderness is an optional outdoor orientation program designed to provide structured adventure and group activities that will ease your transition into the Colorado State University campus community.

The three-night, four-day program includes opportunities for interaction with staff, student leaders, and other new students to begin forging connections that will help you build a sense of community and adjust to the college environment.

Do I have to complete an on-campus Orientation session in order to attend Ram Connect: Wilderness?
YES! All participants in Ram Connect: Wilderness are required to complete an on-campus orientation session in order to attend the program. Ram Connect: Wilderness does not fulfill your orientation requirement.

What time do I arrive/depart?
You should arrive for check-in at 12:00 p.m. on Day 1 at The Campus Recreation Center. The group will return to the Campus Recreation Center 12:00 p.m. on Day 4. Please make your travel arrangements accordingly. Do not schedule flights out of DIA before 4:30 p.m.

What does the registration fee cover?
The $175 program cost is all-inclusive and covers:
- All supplies and park entrance/campsite reservation fees
- Transportation
- Program materials
- Outdoor adventure activities

Is there cell service/Wi-Fi?
There is really spotty service throughout the area. The trip leaders will have a GPS phone that will allow them to contact professional staff in the event of an emergency. Numbers for you to contact in case of an emergency on your part will be provided before the program begins.

Where does Ram Connect: Wilderness take place?
Ram Connect: Wilderness takes place in the remote setting of Colorado’s own Rocky Mountain National Park. Spectacular mountain scenery is all around with some of Colorado’s 14,000ft peaks nearby.

What will the weather be like?
Summer weather in the mountains in Colorado is really varied; it can be nice one minute and then storming the next. It may be warm or even hot during the day because of the intensity of the Sun, but (especially in June), there is also a chance that it will snow. You should begin monitoring the weather a couple of weeks out to get a better idea for what it will be like when you are there.
Frequently Asked Questions

What can my family do while I’m at Ram Connect?

Ram Connect: Wilderness is for incoming students only. Parents and family members can enjoy a short vacation in the Northern Colorado region or the Denver area. In addition to the wide variety of amazing opportunities right here in Fort Collins, Rocky Mountain National Park is just 75 minutes from Fort Collins, and the Denver Metropolitan area is just 60 minutes away. The possibilities for fun and adventure are limitless!

What kind of physical shape do I need to be in?

Ram Connect: Wilderness program is designed to be physically challenging, but within the abilities of a reasonably fit person. No prior outdoor experience is necessary. More important than prior experience is an open mind and a willingness to challenge yourself.

That said, Ram Connect: Wilderness will take you to a variety of elevations and environments up to 13,000 ft, so it is recommended that you come to the program in reasonably good shape and drink a lot of water to avoid altitude sickness.

Please make sure to bring a water bottle to stay hydrated throughout the experience.

Is there a place for me to store my unneeded belongings during the program?

You will be able to leave materials you don’t need on campus while you are at Ram Connect: Wilderness.

What about alcohol, drugs, tobacco?

Drugs and alcohol are never allowed on any Outdoor Program activity or Orientation and Transition Programs event. Being under the influence of any drug or alcohol is prohibited. Alcohol is not allowed on any OP trip in the field and/or transported to the venue. Students caught using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

If you are on prescription drugs, the prescription should be brought in a clearly marked bottle showing the student’s and doctor’s names. Please notify staff if you are on any prescription medications. This policy is in place for the consideration and safety of all participants.

What if my family needs to contact me while I’m gone on Ram Connect: Wilderness?

The trip leaders will have a GPS phone that will allow them to contact professional staff in the event of an emergency. Numbers for you to contact in case of an emergency on your part will be provided before the program begins.