



## BEGINNING WINTER CAMPING COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Alaska Avalanche School is a non-profit organization created for the purpose of promoting public safety in and around the mountain environment through education, research, publishing, and consulting. You have our commitment that we'll provide you with the highest quality of training possible. What you learn during the workshop will depend upon how hard you work during and prior to the course. We'll provide you with the opportunity, the tools, and the encouragement. The rest is up to you. Please read the following information carefully.

### DETAILS:

Cost of the Course: \$225 Per Person

Course Duration: 2 Days: This course starts on a weekday night and runs all day Saturday, and half a day Sunday

Tuition Includes: Instruction, and instructional handouts.

Tuition Does Not Include: Round trip transportation to and from the class-site, food for the duration of the course, all personal gear and clothing (see the Equipment List for more information).

### COURSE CURRICULUM:

This course is geared towards skiers, boarders, climbers, and other backcountry enthusiasts and is an intensive, hands-on course, which will provide students with the skills necessary to travel and stay out overnight in a winter environment. This course consists of 24 hours of classroom and field training.

#### Program curriculum consists of:

- Understanding winter time hazards
- Hypothermia and frostbite prevention and treatment
- Packing gear for travel
- Sleds
- Proper food selection
- Winter cooking
- Sleeping warm
- Camp selection
- Pitching and securing the tent
- Wind walls

### PRE-REQUISITES:

This is a traveling winter camping class. Students must be able to travel with a 40 to 50 pound backpack through unbroken snow for ten miles during the course of two days. Sleds may be used for transporting gear, but be aware that sleds take plenty of hard work to pull. There is no easy way to get the necessary gear into the backcountry. Winter travel requires physical fitness. Handouts will be provided during the evening secession prior to the outing.

### RISK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / WAIVER FORM:

While the Alaska Avalanche School's 30 year track record in safety has been exceptional, a reflection of the times is that each field course participant must sign a detailed waiver of liability. Signing the AAS waiver form means that you acknowledge the inherent risks associated with the activities you will be undertaking, accept responsibility for your actions, and waive any claim for damages against the Alaska Avalanche School and its staff for accidents suffered while participating in the workshop. AAS will send waiver forms to participants prior to the course. **Please read, and sign the form and bring to the first day of the course.**

*If you are a minor you must have the Waiver signed by your legal guardian before you arrive at the course. If you do not wish to sign the waiver, your tuition will be refunded less the \$50 processing fee, (as long as you notify us at least 14 days prior to the start of the course) and you will not be permitted to attend the workshop. Please read the registration and cancellation policies on the AAS registration form for more information and details regarding our policies.*

## **COURSES LOCATION:**

The classroom portion of the training will be held in Anchorage at a location to be determined. This will fall on the weekday evening from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm when we cover various aspects of the course. We'll also cover equipment necessary for the overnight outing.

The field portion of the class will be held at the Independence Mine State Historical Park located at 3,200 feet on the Palmer side of Hatcher Pass in the Talkeetna Mountains. The exact location to be determined during the evening secession prior to the outing. The location depends upon the snow conditions and weather forecast.

*Directions:* To get to Hatcher Pass, head east from Palmer on the Glenn Highway and then turn left (north) onto Fishhook Road (this intersection is approximately 1 mile east of Palmer and is clearly signed). *Important note:* *The road over Hatcher Pass from Willow is closed in the winter.* The Hatcher Pass Lodge (A Frame) is located at approximately 18 miles from the Glenn Highway. This is roughly 4 miles past the Mother Lode Lodge (where there is a big switchback in the road). The road will only be plowed to Hatcher Pass Lodge.

*Note\*:* It is possible that if a storm closes the lower road prior to the course, we may have to cancel the course or change our location. If possible, plan on driving a 4-wheel drive and/or throw a set of chains into your vehicle.

*Parking:* Since January 1, 2005, there has been an Alaska State Park parking fee for Hatcher Pass. This fee has been waived for workshop participants. **Please place this letter on the left hand side of your dashboard as proof of involvement with this workshop.**

## **FOOD:**

Students are responsible for all of their food and water for the duration of the course. Bring enough food to feed yourself for a day and a half: one breakfast, two lunches, and one supper. Remember that a happy stomach makes a happy camper so lunch starts right after breakfast ends and finishes right before supper begins, so bring plenty to munch on during the day.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

*The evening secession prior to the outing:* We will begin at 6 pm and wrap up by 9pm. This is a mandatory meeting, instructors will cover pertinent information for the field portion including gear, food and water requirements.

*The field portion of the Course:* We will begin at 9am in the Hatcher Pass parking lot adjacent to the Hatcher Pass Lodge (the A Frame).

## **PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS AND EQUIPMENT:**

Plan to bring all the necessary clothing and equipment you require to stay outside all day and night in cold, foul weather. In the past we've had the pleasure of temperatures of negative 30 F. However the course may be rescheduled or canceled with above freezing temperatures or rain. For more information on participant equipment requirements please review the course equipment handout.

## **TO REGISTER FOR A COURSE:**

If you have not already registered for a course and wish to, please call the AAS office to check availability. You can either register by phone or print off the registration form from the AAS Website and send it into the AAS office via post, or fax.

## **AAS CANCELLATION, REFUND, AND TRANSFER POLICIES:**

*We highly encourage all participants to review the Cancellation, Refund, and Transfer Policies found on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the AAS Registration form prior to enrollment.*

*Cancellation Insurance:* If for any reason you anticipate a cancellation please consider cancellation insurance. A few recommendations include:

TravelEx: [www.travelex-insurance.com](http://www.travelex-insurance.com)

Travel Guard: [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com)

## **MISCELLANEOUS:**

Student tuition alone does not cover the total course cost. Funding for these programs is derived from individual donations, in-kind contributions, and program receipts from educational workshops. If you desire to contribute to the school we graciously accept donations of monetary value as well as gear that can be put towards our rental program.

Our goal at the Alaska Avalanche School is to provide you with the best possible opportunity for learning about avalanche hazard evaluation in the backcountry.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 907-345-0878 or email: [AlaskaAvalanche@mac.com](mailto:AlaskaAvalanche@mac.com).

We look forward to seeing you in the mountains!