

WHAT TO BRING TO UNDERC-WEST

CLOTHING

Expect a wide range of weather conditions. Days will range from sunny and +100°F to rainy and 35°F. Cold overnight temperatures and frost are not uncommon on the trip out or when camping in the mountains (Yellowstone). Since you will be working outside every day, you must have clothing for a variety of conditions—i.e., rain gear and layers. You will want to wear long pants and boots when walking or hiking to protect yourself from the elements and venomous snakes. Sandals are highly discouraged in the field.

Footwear (hiking boots or sturdy shoes are extremely useful)

Hat (to keep the sun off your neck and eyes)

Clothing layers (it is typically warm but can get cold in the evening, especially in the mountains)

Long trousers (if walking through grasslands they will protect you from venomous snakes and gnarly vegetation)

Leather gloves

Swimming suit (the Flathead River is about a mile from where you will be staying)

CAMPING GEAR

You should bring your own sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and headlamp/flashlight. You may bring additional camping gear for the personal camping trip to Glacier National Park (camping stove, backpack, etc). It's a good idea to coordinate what additional camping gear you'll bring with classmates. The course provides tents that are used during the trips to/from Montana, and which can be checked out for personal use. UNDERC-West owns two tents that sleep 12 and two tents that sleep 3.

FOOD

On the Week-long Road Trip There and Back: During the road trip we will be stopping for lunch and dinner. To increase efficiency at stops for gas we suggest that you pre-pack snacks to last for the entire cross-country trip. You should bring granola bars or other breakfast items, as we will not stop for breakfast along the way.

While at UNDERC-West:

Plan your food carefully while you are at UNDERC because it is 40 minutes to the nearest decent grocery store (the Charlo market works for basics), and trips are usually made just once per week. Plan on easily cooked meals (prepared and eaten in an hour). Most of the day is spent in class and conducting research so you won't want to spend much time cooking. The kitchens are supplied with pots, pans, plates, utensils, etc. It is a good idea (less expensive and easier) to coordinate food purchases and preparation with others in your apartment/class.

On our first day at UNDERC-West we will take a trip to either Missoula or Polson for groceries and supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning items (dish soap, scouring pads, sponges, etc.), and trash bags. Because space in the vehicles will likely be at a premium on the trip out, do not bring supplies and food from home that you could otherwise get at the store. Plus, there is no sales tax in MT.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mailing Address:

(Your Name)

University of Notre Dame

Environmental Research Center-West

55489 Moiese Valley Road

Charlo, MT 59824

Telephone: One landline with answering machine: (406) 644-UNDW (8639)

Computers & Internet Access: It is highly recommended that you bring your own laptop for use with the wireless internet. There is also a student lab equipped with 2 desktop PCs connected to ethernet. UNDERC-West utilizes a single DSL connection shared among 8-12 people, so please do not download MP3s/films or stream anything (radio, movies, TV, video games, etc.). You will tie up the entire system and make others very unhappy!

LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Housing: UNDERC-West rental facilities include three structures. The most northerly structure serves as home to the Assistant Director. The central location sleeps six individuals in three rooms. This unit has wi-fi as well as a laptop which can be hooked up to a projector for showing movies. A smaller housing unit across the road sleeps four individuals in two rooms. This smaller unit has concrete walls and a large shade tree which it cool during hot, summer months. Each living structure has a full bathroom and kitchen with dining and recreational areas but is much more rustic than the accommodations at UNDERC-East.

Amenities: Washers and dryers are located in each structure and are free of charge. Both units are equipped with the basic household appliances. Storage areas (e.g. for personal effects) are at a premium, as is space in the vehicles on the way to UNDERC. Do not plan on bringing your entire wardrobe. There is landline phone service (calling card required for outgoing calls). You will be in Montana, so who really needs satellite TV, pool tables, or ping pong; go outside and enjoy nature! :) The Flathead River is a short walk away for swimming and fishing.

Bedding: You will need to bring your own towels, pillows, blankets, and bed linens for the summer (or use your sleeping bag). The mattresses in the student housing units are twin size. Rooms are shared with at least 1 roommate, so plan accordingly for storage and amount of personal items.

OTHER

- water bottles (enough to hold all the water you would need for a day)
- insect repellent (if you choose, biting insects are fairly sparse in Montana)
- sunscreen (highly recommended, the sun is direct and intense in grasslands)
- sunglasses (again, the sun is direct and intense)
- binoculars (for use in recreation, research, and avian ecology module; can check out a pair if needed)
- camera (for memories)
- pocket knife/multipurpose tool
- stamps
- notebooks, pens, pencils
- clock-radio/ipod
- cell phone (reception is not that bad, except in spots; Verizon works best, Sprint works poorly)
- extension cord
- bear spray (if you plan on hiking in the Mission Mountains, Glacier, or Yellowstone; the class owns a canister)