

# *Tour de Gila*



*Ritt Kellogg Grant Application*

- GO  
- EVAC. EXPERIENCES  
(ACCIDENT PRONE?)

## Tour de Gila

*Participants:* Amanda Dooley, Scott Hutchins, Dan Lustick, Carrie Sessions

*Dates:* May 22 to June 12, 2005 (16 days in the field)

*Destination:* Gila Wilderness, southwestern New Mexico

*Method of Travel:* Foot, hiking roughly 100 miles

Having just celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act, we feel it appropriate to visit the birthplace of Wilderness. Created in 1924, the Gila was the first designated Wilderness in the United States. A place of rugged mountains, deep canyons, grey wolves, and of course, gila monsters, this area is one of the last untouched and undeveloped areas in the Southwest.

Over the past few years, we have all traveled extensively in the Utah wilderness. Each one of us has developed a strong connection to the canyonlands. Now however, we are ready to explore a new area of the Southwest. While it will be a familiar environment, the surroundings and atmosphere of New Mexico will be new and distinctive.

Over 15 days, we will come across various perspectives of the Gila Wilderness. Following the Gila River, we will discover the lowland area and wider canyons. We will then turn North, hiking along mesas and ridges, including a summit of the highest peak in the area. We will finish our loop by traveling along the Middle Fork of the Gila, a narrow canyon marked by dramatic walls and geologic formations.

Along this 100-mile loop around the Gila Wilderness we will experience a variety of ecosystems and geographic features. Not only will this be a physical adventure, but our hope is that it will be an educational and cultural experience as well.

We thank you in advance for considering our application. We have spent a great deal of time and effort compiling this application, and we appreciate and acknowledge the commitment you have to the Ritt Kellogg Memorial Fund.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Scott Hutchins

Amanda Dooley


Dan Lustick

Carrie Sessions

C. Sessions

I also have the "Healthcare Provider CPR," issued in September 2004. I do not however, have a copy of my card.

8523

American Heart Association   
Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke


**Heartsaver CPR**  
**Carrie Sessions**

This card certifies that the above individual has successfully completed the national cognitive and skills evaluations in accordance with the curriculum of the AHA for the Heartsaver CPR Program. **Adult CPR / Child CPR / Infant CPR**

Issue Date: **APRIL 2004** Recommended Renewal Date: **APRIL 2006**

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	Cub Creek. E to West Fork Gila R.	Crk. and West Fork of Gila.		
11	E on trail at Turkeyfeather Crk. for 2mi. NW on trail past Quentin Spring	lower Marrs Spring	6.5	7400-7800 8200-7600
12	E in Clear Creek off trail for 5.5mi. W into the Middle Fork of the Gila R.	2mi into Gila R.	7.5	7600-6400
13	SE along Gila R.	intersection of Indian Creek and Gila R.	6	6400-6200
14	SE along Gila R.	2mi past West Canyon	7	6200-6000
15	SE along Gila R. for ~11mi to the Visitors Center and camp at Grapevine Campsite.	**Civilization**		Pick up a car at 6000-5800

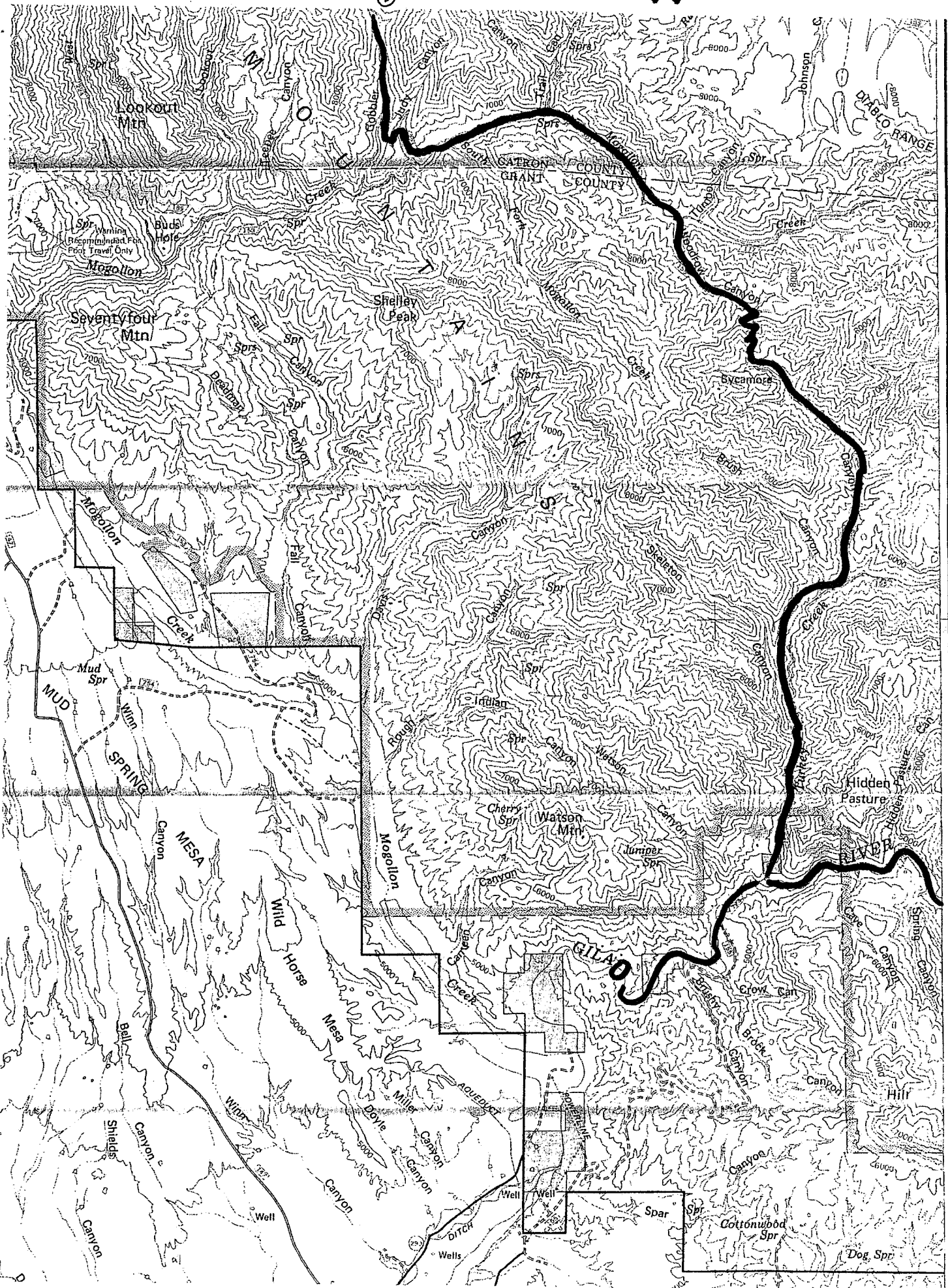
#### Travel Plans to and from Trailhead

On June 12, we will depart from Meeker, Colorado (Scott's House) in two cars; we will travel East along I-70, then South along I-25 until reaching Albuquerque. We will spend the night in Albuquerque with a friend. The next morning we will drive the rest of the way to the Gila. Along the way, we will drive to the Western edge of the Wilderness to drop off our food cache. That afternoon, we will drive to Visitor Center and sleep in the Grapevine Campsite at the trailhead. The total mileage is approximately 630 miles and should take 11 hours.

We will follow the same route home to Meeker.

①

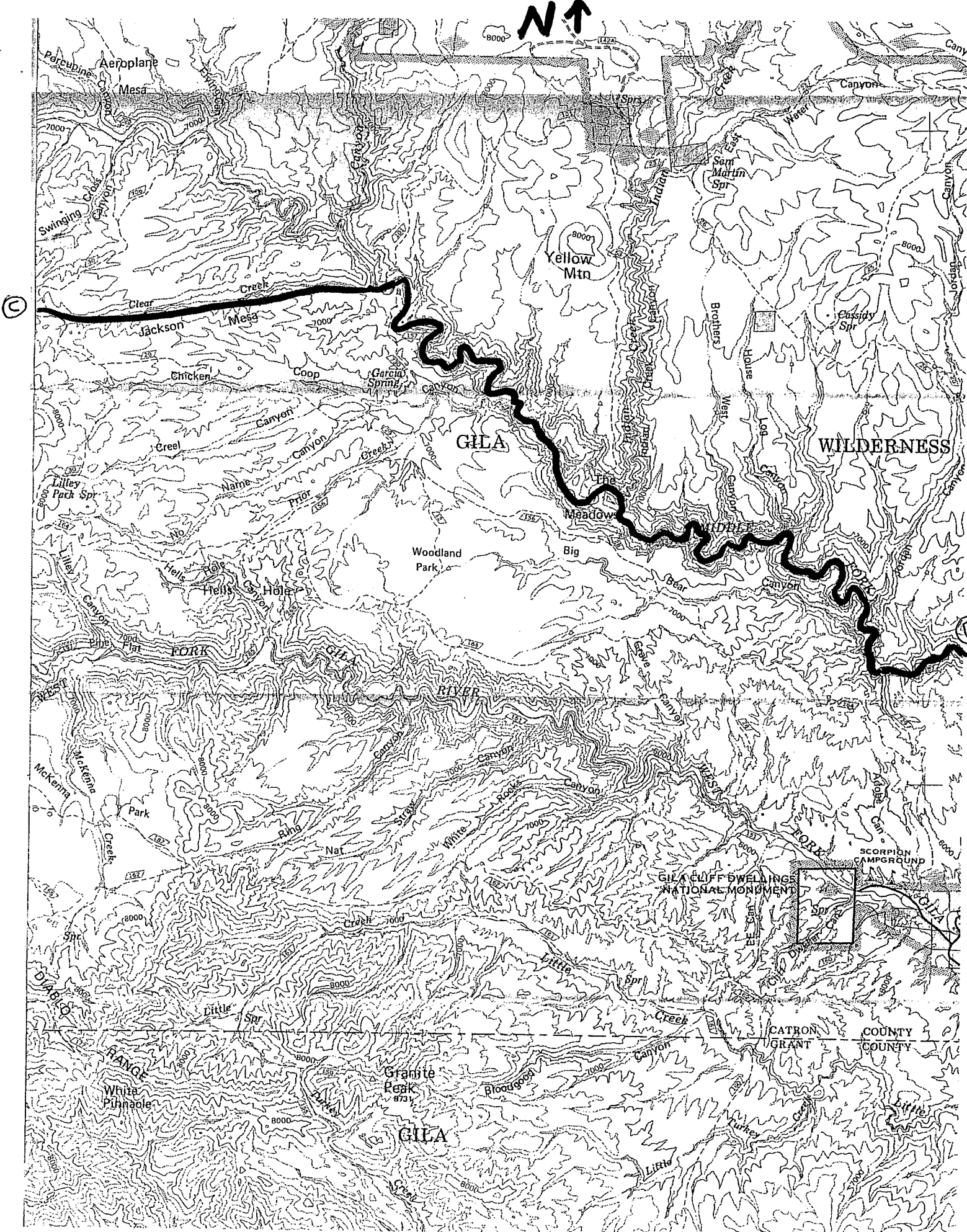
N ↑



33° 07' 30"

②





### Evacuation Plans

Our evacuation plans are rather simple and can be determined quickly when in the field. The evacuation routes can be divided into sections as we will be keeping to the edges of the Wilderness area. Therefore, we will be within a reasonable number of miles from a substantial road at all times.

The first section will include the distance from the Grapevine campsite to the intersection of the trail at Packsaddle Canyon and the main fork of the Gila. From this section we can easily access highway 15 to the west. This runs between the Gila Visitor Center to the north and Silver City to the south.

The next section will be defined by Packsaddle Canyon west to our re-supply spot and north along Turkey Creek to the upper reach of Sycamore Canyon before the pass over to Woodrow Canyon. From this section we can exit the backcountry via the main fork of the Gila, past our re-supply spot and out to Road 293. From there it is only a few miles to the town of Gila.

The third section extends from Woodrow Canyon north past Mogollon Peak all the way to the Middle Fork of the Gila R. Within this section an evacuation route is taken north on trail 151 to the Willow Creek Campsites on Road 159. This road runs east and west along the northern edge of the Wilderness and the nearest town is Mogollon to the west approximately 12miles.

The last section will include our remaining travel in the Middle Fork of the Gila River. This canyon feeds directly into the visitor's center at the Gila Cliff Dwellings where we plan on ending our route.

At all times during our trip we will not be more than 15 miles from a paved road. We are all familiar with proper evacuation protocol; additionally, Dan and Carrie both have experience with high risk, extended backcountry evacuations. Cross country travel and orientation is purported to be difficult in the areas we will be traveling, however, all our evacuation routes can take advantage of major drainages. These drainages will allow us to reach substantial roads in the case of an emergency.

In the case of an evacuation due to flash flooding, we may take advantage of any of the number of trails crisscrossing the Gila Wilderness. Each of us is accomplished and confident in reading maps and traveling in the backcountry.

Food

We have modeled our rations after menus from our previous trips. We are familiar with the food we are bringing, and further, are wonderful cooks!

Traveling in the desert requires a specific type of rationing. The warm weather limits the type of food acceptable to bring. Furthermore, a trip of this length requires monitoring the collective weight of food. While we are keeping our food light and compact, we have not let this get in the way of sufficient nutrition. We realize that having enough amounts of carbohydrates and protein flowing through our veins and invigorating our muscles and keeping our minds sharp is crucial.

Our trip will consist of two ration periods, one 5-day period and one 10-day period. Before we start the hike, we will cache our food a few miles up the main fork of the Gila River from road 293. We have planned in approximately an extra day of food in each ration to allow for the unexpected.

	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT NEEDED	TOTAL PRICE
Bagels	\$0.20-.50 each	30 each	\$15.00
Granola	\$2.29-4.29/18oz box	28 servings	\$21.00
Cream of Wheat	\$3.99/10 pkts	16 servings	\$15.96
Pretzels	\$1.69-2.39/10oz bag	3 bags	\$7.17
Nuts	\$2.99/lb	4 lbs	\$11.96
M&Ms	\$2.99/14oz bag	2 bags	\$5.98
Raisins	\$2.49/lb (2.5 cups)	5 lbs	\$12.45
Power Bars	\$1.39 each	64 each	\$88.96
Beef Jerky	\$5.99/3.6oz bag	8 bags	\$47.92
Snickers	\$0.69 each	8 each	\$5.52
Peanut Butter	\$1.77-2.66/lb	2 lbs	\$5.32
Summer Sausage	\$3.49 each	4 each	\$13.96
Cheese	\$4.69-5.98/lb	6 lbs	\$35.88
Tuna	\$2.29/7oz pkg	12 each	\$27.48
Pasta	\$1.29/lb (penne)	9 lbs	\$11.61
Tortillas	\$1.69/bag of 10	3 bags	\$5.07
Pesto	\$4.00/lb of pasta	6 packets	\$12.00
Couscous	\$2.19/5.5oz box (3 srvgs)	6 boxes	\$13.14
Lentils	\$2.29/lb	2 lbs	\$4.58
Rice & Beans	\$2.49/7oz box (3srvgs)	11 boxes	\$27.39
Ramen	\$0.39 each	6 each	\$2.34
Tea	\$2.79-4.99/box	2 boxes	\$9.98
Cocoa	\$2.29/lb	1.5 lbs	\$3.44
Brownies	\$1.89/box	2 boxes	\$3.78
Spices	\$0.50 each	6 each	\$3.00
Tomato Powder	\$3.98/lb of pasta	4 packets	\$7.96
Oil	\$1.39/16 oz	1 bottle	\$1.39
Hot Sauce	\$2.49	1 bottle	\$2.49
Soy Sauce	\$3.95/8 oz	1 bottle	\$3.98
Garlic/Onion	Approx. \$1.29/lb	3 lbs	\$3.87
Travel Food	\$12/person/day	3 days	\$144.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$532.12</b>



## Risk Management

### Fires

- Since June 22, 2004, 194 fires have been recorded. People have caused ten of them, and lightning has caused the rest.
- We do not plan on having any campfires.
- Before leaving Colorado, we will contact Loretta Benavidez, the Gila National Forest Fire Information Officer at 505-388-8245, for current fire information.

### Lightning

- Because of a high likelihood of lightning we will be familiar with lightning protocol. We will practice lightning protocol as a group in a mock situation prior to the trip in order to familiarize all members of the group with the technique.
- We will avoid traveling above tree line or on exposed terrain when inclement weather is approaching.

### Dangerous Flora and Fauna

- Poison Ivy:
  - Because poison ivy is prevalent, especially in creek and river bottoms, we are able to identify the plant using a flora field guide.
- Scorpions and Tarantulas:
  - If a member of the group is stung or bitten by either insect we will wash the wound thoroughly to prevent infection and seek medical attention.
  - We will be aware of our surroundings and footing to avoid dangerous encounters.
- Wolves:
  - Mexican Grey Wolves were reintroduced to the Gila in 1999.
  - If we encounter Mexican Grey Wolves the Park Service suggests yelling and throwing rocks or sticks to frighten away the animals.
- Mountain Lions and Bears:
  - To avoid attracting mountain lions and bears to our campsite we will set up our kitchen at least 100 yards down wind of our sleeping area.
  - We will store all food (including toiletries such as toothpaste and toothbrushes) away from the sleeping area suspended from a tree or rock overhang.
  - If we encounter a mountain lion or bear while traveling we will provide the animal with adequate space for safety, and we will avoid threatening actions.
  - The Park Service also suggests waving arms, yelling, and throwing rocks or sticks if the animals threaten our safety.
- Rattle snakes, Coral snakes, and Gila monsters:
  - Rattle snakes, Coral snakes, and Gila monsters are generally found in rocky areas where there is access to both sun and shade so that they can regulate their body temperatures, when traveling in such areas we will be acutely aware of our surroundings and footing in order to avoid a dangerous encounter.

#### Water Availability

- The three forks of the Gila River are reliable sources of water throughout the year.
- When relying on a spring, however, we will have an alternate plan in the event that our anticipated water source is dry.
- Before leaving Colorado, we will check with the Forest Service staff for up-to-date information on water availability.
- Iodine and boiling will be our methods of water purification.

#### River Crossings

- Water levels will be high at this time of year; we acknowledge that some crossings may be extremely hazardous.
- We will unbuckle all belts on our backpacks and traverse the river using the buddy system to ensure a safe crossing.
- When possible we will walk to riffles to avoid deep and swift water.

#### Flash Floods

- The possibility of a flash flood is less than it would be during the rainy season, however, flash floods occur along the Gila River and all three of its forks, along major creeks, and side canyons at anytime of the year.
- We will be aware of rising water levels after a storm, and we will take to higher ground if we notice an increasing volume of water.
- We will camp on high ground that shows no signs of previous flooding.

#### Emergency Resources

- There is a helicopter pad located at the trailhead, which can be utilized by an emergency evacuation team.
- We will leave a copy of our itinerary with the Gila Forest Rangers.
- Emergency phone numbers:
  - Glenwood Ranger District (West side of Gila Wilderness): (505) 539-2481
  - Gila Visitor Center: (505) 536-9461
  - Local Hospital (in Silver City): (505) 388-1591
    - Has helicopter evacuation services