

**ESCI Field Camp**  
**Elwha Research and Restoration Trip, 16-25 April 2024**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL BRIEFING** (conducted 12 April 2024)

Environmental Hazards

Weather – cold, wet  
-- sun exposure  
Storms – rain, snow  
-- lightning  
-- flash floods  
-- high winds  
Darkness  
River -- cold water  
-- rocks, LWD  
-- fast currents, rapids  
-- holes/water reversals  
-- foot entrapment hazards  
River banks -- unstable banks  
-- loose sediment  
Cliffs and ridges  
Trees -- falling limbs, “widomakers”  
-- falling trees, snags  
Tripping hazards, exposed roots  
Wildlife – bears  
-- cougars  
-- elk & deer  
-- raccoons  
-- coyotes  
-- mice (& Hanta virus)  
-- TICKS  
Unstable slopes & trails  
Water contaminants – Giardia, GI parasites  
COVID

Human Hazards

Ego  
Poor communication  
Interpersonal conflict  
Unnecessary risk taking  
Navigation errors, getting lost  
Pre-existing (medical) conditions  
Allergies  
Dehydration  
Hypothermia  
Improper gear & improper use of gear  
Poor nutrition  
Improper food storage  
Sleep deprivation & fatigue  
Distraction & lack of focus  
Inadequate (or no) footwear  
Inadequate first aid: care, supplies  
Stoves & fuel bottles  
Hot water  
Knives  
Poor hygiene  
Fecal matter/excrement  
(i.e., contaminated hands as vector for illness)  
COVID & other illness/diseases  
Other people  
Substances; drugs & alcohol  
  
Campfires -- hot embers  
-- proximity to tents

(continued)

## Rules to separate environmental and human hazards

Morning and evening check-ins

Minimum group size away from camp = 3 (“away” = beyond vocal distance)

Camp boundary for individual activity = within vocal distance

Sign-out/in form in camp, for all group trips away from camp

Search party if group > 1 hour after return time

Proper food storage -- whenever away from food/camp

-- no food in tents

Hand washing/sanitizing after defecation

All water for drinking or cooking to be filtered or boiled

Carry 1st aid kit during day hikes

Stoves off after use

Routine tick-checks

Follow group norms

Follow WWU policy: no drugs, alcohol

## Also consider:

Communicate environmental hazards to rest of group

Be prepared for weather, contingencies during day hikes -- bring 10 essentials, layers, rain gear

-- secure tent, gear before leaving camp

Emergency communication; carry on day trips away from camp -- Sat phone, InReach