Welcome
You are receiving this information packet because you are confirmed for a trip with Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures. Please read this packet in its entirety. It will help you with planning your trip and understanding what to expect.

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Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures  www.hwaters.org

167 Fell St., San Francisco, CA 94102, Phone: (415) 552-1190, Email: info@hwaters.org
Overview of Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures

Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures is a San Francisco based non-profit that has been offering low-cost weekend trips to people with HIV and AIDS since 1996. Over the years, we have served thousands of men and women of all ages and backgrounds, and all ranges of physical ability. The summer months are our rafting season, but during fall and winter, our programs include cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and sea kayaking.

Your rafting trip includes tent camping, food, boating equipment, warm clothing, sleeping bag and pad, beginning level instruction, and expert level guiding. Each trip's staff is scaled with an appropriate number of volunteers to accommodate the group. For a more complete list of what we provide, please see the section following the packing checklist. We also provide limited transportation in a first come, first serve basis.

You do not need rafting or outdoor experience for this trip. Many participants are new to this kind of activity, and some have never spent the night in the outdoors. We understand some apprehension of facing whitewater rapids or camping “in the woods.” Our trip leaders and guides are trained to be sensitive to those apprehensions, and trips are structured so that you will not be challenged beyond your ability - in the spirit of cooperation.

Partner, Caregiver and Youth Policies

Partners, caregivers, or close family members, regardless of their HIV status, are invited to travel with us for the same deposit amount as those they will be accompanying. They are required to complete all the necessary paperwork in advance of the trip.

Youth are considered for the rafting program on a case-by-case basis. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian who is actively parenting or mentoring the youth and is able to assist in completing and understanding all required paperwork on behalf of the youth. This person must also be able to act as their legal guardian in the event of an emergency.

Please contact us to talk more about bringing a youth on our trips.
Weekend Overview

If you are riding in the Healing Waters van, we depart Saturday morning from our office at 167 Fell Street at **7:00 AM**, promptly. Participants must arrive at the office no later than **6:45 AM** for check in. We will make an additional pick-up stop at the Del Norte BART station in El Cerrito. (On an as needed basis, we will stop at the LGBT Center in Sacramento.) The drive from the Bay Area to Camp Lotus is approximately 2.5 hours with one “pit stop” mid-way. If you want to carpool or drive yourself, you can meet us at Camp Lotus by 9:30 AM. We operate on a very tight schedule, so it is important for everyone to arrive at camp on time. If you arrive after the safety talk, you will not be permitted down river.

If you drive, you are responsible for the $5 per day parking costs at Camp Lotus.

Immediately after arriving at camp, we will gather for Opening Circle. Opening Circle is where you will get to know your fellow rafters, our volunteers, and learn logistical details for the weekend. Following Opening Circle, you will be assigned camping gear by host volunteers, and set up your tent. If you arrive at camp early, you may get your camping gear and setup your tent in advance of Opening Circle. Hosts will be available to assist wherever needed.

After setting up, you will enjoy a nice lunch in camp before getting ready for the river. Guides and trip hosts will assign all your rafting gear.

Once everyone has their gear, our guides will instruct you to be “river ready”, followed by paddling basics and safety; then it’s down to the river and on the boats. The guides will get you to your assigned boat, where you will have a brief paddle talk and final safety instructions.

The rafting lasts approximately 4 - 5 hours. The South Fork of the American River is rated Class III on a scale of I (flat water) to VI (extreme). This means that you will encounter everything from calm stretches to fun and exciting rapids that are manageable and appropriate for beginner paddlers. There will be at least one stop along the way down river for snacks and the chance to use the bathroom.

After rafting, we will return to the campground to enjoy a wonderful dinner prepared by our volunteer cooks. We’ll have a campfire, and spend the night in our cozy tents. Sunday morning begins with a hearty breakfast and enjoy some quiet moments by the river before breaking down camp. We’ll then have Closing Circle to reflect on the weekend. On our way home, you may stop to see your rafting pictures from Saturday and have lunch at a local restaurant (on your own). You may also view rafting photos online after your trip by following this link to Hotshot Imaging. We’ll return to the Bay Area between 4- 6 PM on Sunday, depending on traffic.

Weekend Agenda

This is a basic outline of the weekend schedule. Notice that it's a packed schedule, and everyone's cooperation is key to keeping on track and a successful trip. Your safety and enjoyment is important to us, so please review this schedule entirely.

Saturday:

6:45 AM  Participants arrive at HWWA office for check in, brief introductions and announcements (e.g. additional pick-ups, bathroom stops, etc.).

7:00 AM  Depart from the HWWA office.

9:30 - 10:00 AM  Arrive at Camp Lotus.

10:00 - 10:30 AM  Opening Circle. There will be introductions to other participants and volunteers. You will also meet your river guides for the day.

11:30 AM  Lunch

12:00 PM Noon  River Ready and Safety Talk

1PM  Get on the river

6:30PM  Return to camp, shower/clean up and relax before dinner

7:30PM  DINNER *Following, there will be a campfire with optional s’mores

10PM  Quiet Time

Sunday:

8:00 AM  BREAKFAST Coffee, tea, hot chocolate will be available before breakfast

9:00AM  Morning announcements

9:30-10:00AM  Break down camp

10:30AM  Closing Circle – Reflecting on the weekend

11:00AM  Trip Evaluation Forms

11:30/Noon  Leave camp and head back to SF, lunch is on your own
Expectations

- Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures' trips are dry, but definitely not dull. Alcoholic beverages or recreational drugs are not permitted on this trip.
- Smoking (including vaping) is not allowed anywhere in the Healing Waters campsite. Please consult your trip leader or HWWA volunteer camp host for a designated smoking area.
- Please treat our vans, tents, rafts and other equipment with the greatest care possible.
- Please treat your fellow rafters and our volunteers with respect. We will not tolerate disrespect or inappropriate behavior towards others during the trip.
- If you’re riding in our van, please eat breakfast before you arrive. If you cannot eat before you leave, you may bring a portable meal to eat during “pit stops” or upon arrival at the river.
- You will be having a lot of fun on the river. Drink lots of water to stay hydrated as temperatures can reach 100 degrees at Camp Lotus in the summer. Wear and reapply sun block every few hours. Mosquitoes may mean you wish to bring insect repellant. Stay on pathways at Camp Lotus to avoid encountering poison oak off trail.

Service animals

Service animals are permitted, but you must contact Camp Lotus prior to your trip date. Service animals are not permitted on the river, and the animal may not left behind with anyone other than its owner.

Physical Requirements for Participation in the Rafting Program

Our trips accommodate a broad range of physical ability. There will be boats where paddling by everyone is necessary, and boats where paddling is entirely optional. Please speak with a trip leader about any concerns, and you will be assigned to a boat that meets your ability and comfort.

River travel is extremely fun, but some elements of rafting are beyond our control. People occasionally fall into a rapid. Fellow rafters may accidentally bump into each other, etc. The required Personal Flotation Device (PFD) for all participants provides plenty of buoyancy in the water. The basic training instructs everyone on how to assist a fellow rafter back onboard. If you’re in a boat that requires paddling, only a moderate amount of upper body strength is necessary. If you’re in a boat where you are not paddling, then a firm grip is your best friend.

As always, talk to your trip leader about any concerns you may have. Our trained medics will review your medical information prior to heading down the river. For your safety, they may ask to speak to you regarding any medical issues you have.
Rafting & Camping Packing Checklist

When packing, remember that cotton or cotton blends are not appropriate clothing on the water. Cotton will hold water, and you will be cold.

- Hot and cold beverage containers to use all weekend
- Refillable water bottle for the river
- Waterproof sun block
- Sun block for lips
- Sunglasses with a retention strap to keep them on your head
- Insect repellant
- A hat that shields sun from your face - baseball caps are fine
- Bathing suit or nylon shorts for rafting
- Synthetic shirt for rafting – we recommend polyester, nylon, polypropylene, capeline, coolmax, etc.
- Warm socks for rafting – wool is preferred
- 2 pairs of shoes -- one for camp and one pair of shoes or sandals that can get wet in the raft. Footwear for rafting must lace or velcro on. **Slip-ons or flip-flops are NOT allowed on the river.**
- Towel and personal toiletries (there are hot showers at the campground)
- Pillow
- Flashlight or headlamp
- All medication you require or use on a regular basis. Dramamine or Bonine if you tend to get carsick.
- Money for parking (if you drive) - $5
- Bottled water or money to purchase bottled water at the campground if you prefer to avoid the local tap water -- **in 20 years of trips we have never had any problems with the local tap water.**
- Comfortable warm pants – synthetic long underwear, fleece sweatpants for cool evenings
- Tee shirt and a comfortable warm shirt
- Wool or fleece sweater
- Warm hat – fleece or wool

**Healing Waters will loan the following for a rafting trip**

- A water repellant jacket
- Wool or synthetic hat
- Fleece jacket
- Polypropylene top
- Polypropylene bottom
- Wool or synthetic socks
- Sleeping bag rated to 20°F
- Sleeping pad
- Tent
- Wetsuit and splash jacket, if needed
- All boats and related equipment
- Safety instruction and basic rafting techniques
- 1 lunch, 1 dinner, 1 breakfast as well as snacks while on river
- All transportation, if needed
Cancellation and Refund Policy

- You may receive a full refund or credit for another trip if you notify us within 7 days before the start date of your trip.
- No credit or refunds will be issued if you cancel less than 7 days before the trip start date.
- No credit or refunds will be issued if you do not complete your trip for any reason.

Excessive last minute drop-outs may result in trip cancellation due to lack of participants. Only those who did not cancel will receive a refund.

Saturday Morning Departure Details

We recommend that you eat breakfast prior to meeting us on Saturday morning. If you cannot eat before you leave, please bring a portable meal to eat during “pit stops” or upon arrival at the river. We will make one stop midway to Camp Lotus.

Saturday Morning meeting times and places:

6:45 AM: check-in at Healing Waters in San Francisco, 167 Fell Street (no parking available)
7:00 AM: Van departs Healing Waters office.
7:30 AM: Van arrives at El Cerrito Del Norte BART Station. If driving please park in the parking structure or in the adjacent parking lot. Parking is free. The white van will pick up in the drop off area between the BART station and the parking structure.
9:00 AM: (as needed) Van arrives at the Sacramento LGBT Center in downtown Sacramento at 1967 L Street. This is the third and final stop en route to the river. The van may not arrive promptly at 9 AM. We ask that you arrive on time, and wait patiently until the van arrives.

9:30 - 9:45 AM: Arrive at Camp Lotus, in group site Hogan's South. If you are driving to the river. Please bring $5 for parking and pay the attendant when you arrive. Parking for all cars is the lower parking lot, and not at the campsite. Once you unload your personal items, immediately move your car to the lower lot. If you have a handicap tag or placard, you may park in the cam area, or in a designated handicap spot.

IMPORTANT: Please note that Sacramento LGBT Center and Camp Lotus are in not affiliated or connected to Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures. They will not be able to answer any questions regarding our services, and in some cases they may have never heard of us. The LGBT center serves only as a convenient, visible, and/or well-known meeting point. Park your car at your own risk. Sacramento LGBT Center or Healing Waters will be responsible for any damage to your car including: theft or vandalism. Please park under a light whenever possible.
Meet up Locations

You can meet us in one of 3 different locations:

1. **6:45 AM San Francisco – Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures**:
   167 Fell between Van Ness and Franklin – *no parking available*

   **Getting To Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures by Bus:**
   Several Muni lines have Saturday morning service with stops near and around 167 Fell. The easiest way to learn how to get to 167 Fell is to use the on-line trip planner at: [www.sfmuni.com/planner](http://www.sfmuni.com/planner). You can also call Muni’s information center at (415) 673-6864. The center is open weekdays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

2. **7:30 AM El Cerrito del Norte BART Station**: *Parking is free during the weekend. Please meet outside the garage and across from the BART station.* [Link to Google Map]

   ![Map of El Cerrito del Norte BART Station]
   Park in this garage and meet between the garage and the station.

3. **9:00 AM Sacramento LGBT Center (as needed)**: *free street parking available.* [Link To Google Map]

   This is the third and final stop before proceeding to camp, and occasionally subject to slight delays. We ask that you be on time, and be patient if the van does not arrive at exactly 9:00.
Driving Directions to Camp Lotus from Points West

Take Hwy to the junction of 50 East, towards South Lake Tahoe. Approximately thirty miles beyond the 80/50 junction, exit at Ponderosa Road. Turn left over the freeway and go right on N. Shingle Springs Road (Immediately after the 50 West onramp). Proceed eleven miles on that road - following signs to Coloma and Lotus. Turn left at Bassi Road. Continue for one mile to the Camp Lotus entrance. Pay the attendant for parking ($5) and meet us in Group Campsite Hogan's South (first site on the right after entering the camp).

Map to Camp Lotus (blue line is the river):

If you get lost, you can contact Camp Lotus at 530-622-8672
Other Useful Contact Information

**Healing Waters Wilderness Adventures**  
167 Fell Street, San Francisco, CA 94102  
415. 552. 1190

**Camp Lotus**  
5461 Bassi Road, Lotus, CA 95651  
530.622.8672

**Hotshot Imaging**  
You may visit the Hotshot website to see if there are pictures of you to download. Search for Commercial Rafting -> South Fork American River -> Healing Waters. You will be asked a few questions, including the date you ran the river. You will receive a follow up email with watermarked images. You can order photos after you've had a look through them. You may view the photos without obligation to purchase.