



Sharing Nature – Enriching Lives.™ Since 1979.

Wallowa-Grande Ronde River

The Grande Ronde flows through the Blue Mountains of Northeast Oregon in an area the Native Americans called "the land of winding waters." It is a fast-flowing river through a canyon carpeted in green by a thick conifer forest. The rugged canyon walls rise from 3,000 to 4,000 feet above the river. The clear water and deep green forests accented by black outcroppings of basalt cliffs combine to create a stunning setting.

The rapids are mild and this is the perfect river for family groups with young children, or people wanting to try inflatable kayaking for the first-time. We also use paddle rafts and for camp gear, oar rafts, which are also available to carry passengers.

Along the way, we may be fortunate to see Rocky Mountain Elk, mule or white-tail deer and big horn sheep. This country is critical winter habitat for all these species and more. We'll certainly see various birds of prey, including the probability of bald eagles. Mergansers (a river duck) are frequently sighted, as well as countless song-birds. Fishermen will enjoy casting a line for the rainbow trout that live in the river. In 1988, in recognition of the outstanding resource values of the Grande Ronde River, Congress designated a 44-mile segment as a National Wild and Scenic River.

Trips begin at the put-in at Minam, Oregon, on the Wallowa River. We travel around 10 miles the first day on the frolicking, fast-flowing Wallowa, passing through dramatic forested canyons. We reach the confluence with the Grande Ronde late afternoon and make camp shortly thereafter. The river widens from here on, but is still a mountain stream. Numerous tributaries join the river, making excellent camping and hiking areas. It's easy to appreciate why the Chief Joseph band of the Nez Perce were loathe to leave this area when forced to do so in 1877. We'll learn about the culture and history of the Nez Perce as we travel downstream.

ROW offers trips ranging from three to five days. Three and four-day trips travel 44 miles and take out in the small settlement of Troy, while five-day trips continue another 45 miles to the confluence of the Snake River, for a total of 89 miles. We camp on beautiful forested benches where hiking, bird watching and stargazing are popular activities. Air temperatures are in the 80's to 90's in June and July and water temperatures will be in the 50's in June and the low 60's in July.

Luxury Camping: Forget those images of leaky tents and camp food out of a can. You'll be amazed how comfortable camping can be when done the ROW way. On trips with 13 or more guests, we use a large 22-foot cargo raft to carry the bulk of the camping gear, food, etc. This allows our smaller oar-powered rafts to be lighter and more maneuverable. The cargo raft, along with two- support crew, arrives at camp ahead of the group and gets the kitchen set up including dining tables and chairs. The crew also sets up the spacious two-person tents that ROW provides. When we arrive in camp all you have to do is carry your personal gear (stored in a ROW-provided easy-to-use waterproof bag) to the tent of your choice and roll out your sleeping bag, flannel liner and thick, self-inflating foam sleeping pad (also provided by ROW). This gives you an extra half-hour of time for doing something you'd enjoy rather than setting up a tent. *(Note: If we have a trip with less than 13 guests, then due to economic and logistical reasons, we may not run our cargo raft. On these smaller trips guests and gear travel together down the river. Our guides are still happy to set up your tent if you like, or you may enjoy doing it yourself.)*

Camp Time: To give you the opportunity to explore on your own, we generally arrive in camp no later than 4:00 each day so you have time to go exploring, fishing, read a book, or whatever you might want. Then, around 5:30, we serve a lavish hors d'oeuvres as we continue with dinner preparation.

Meals: We hand-select the freshest fruits and vegetables we can find and pack them carefully in huge ice-coolers. Likewise, these coolers carry fresh dairy products and meats. From these ingredients we prepare bountiful, healthy meals. Sustainably harvested wild Alaskan Salmon served with a fresh garden salad; Prime Rib combined with a fresh Chilean salad and Idaho mashed potatoes or made-on-the-river lasagna is a few possible entrees. Big salads of vegetables and fruit add color and variety to every meal. Desserts are made each evening in our Dutch ovens and range from authentic cobbler and pineapple upside-down cake. We serve juice each morning and moderate amounts of bottled wine with dinner. We also provide two beers and two sodas or juices per person per day. There's always plenty of cold water, lemonade mix, tea, coffee and cocoa. You're welcome to bring your own beverages or alcohol as well. We always have plenty of ice to keep your drinks cold.

Your Choice of Craft: In addition to the sweep boat that carries all the camping gear, we use three other kinds of river craft. The traditional raft is a self-bailing oar-powered raft, which we row, using two oars. These are 16-17 feet long. We also offer a smaller, self-bailing 14-foot paddle raft, where 4 to 6 people paddle along with our guide. The Grande Ronde is a great place to paddle an inflatable kayak, or Daring Duckie, as we call them. You have a choice of riding in any of these river craft, and many people enjoy trying all three during the course of the trip. We encourage you to bring a camera, which will be easily accessible on the oar-rafts from the waterproof camera boxes we provide. *(Note: On the few trips we operate with less than 13 guests, we may not have enough people interested in paddling to have a paddle raft along. This decision is based on exactly how many guests want to paddle, what percentage of time they want to paddle, and possible logistical constraints based on water levels and other factors. We will still have duckies on smaller trips, if requested.)*

The Last Supper: Another small touch ROW adds is the inclusion of a farewell dinner on our last evening in Lewiston with ROW guests and guides. This dinner brings a nice "closure" to the week of adventure everyone has shared. (All inclusive except for beverages.)

Meeting Time: We meet you at **7:00 PM the evening before your trip at the Red Lion Inn in Lewiston.** Here we have an orientation meeting to tell you more about the trip, answer your last minute questions, and to give you your waterproof bags to pack. As well we'll have some of our specialty outdoor items for sale such as ROW hats, eyeglass retainers, T-shirts, polypro underwear or whatever else you may have forgotten.

Launch Point: Early the next morning (around 7:30am) we leave the hotel in the ROW bus and drive to the put-in. Please have breakfast on your own before we leave. We put in at Minam, Oregon, a spectacular 3-hour drive from Lewiston. On the last day of the trip, we'll return you to the Red Lion Inn where we encourage you to spend the night and enjoy our hosted "farewell dinner" with other trip members and the ROW crew.

Lodging Accommodations: We meet you at the **Red Lion Inn** in Lewiston, Idaho. ROW will make your motel reservations for you and this will be reflected on your invoice. The hotel has storage facilities for your luggage and a place for valuables while you are on the river. Cars may be left in their parking lot. Local phone number is (208) 799-1000.

If you drive: There are good highways leading to Lewiston from all directions. Some people may even want to fly to Seattle or Portland and drive. From either city, to Lewiston it's roughly 350 miles and takes about 6 hours.

If you fly: The Lewiston airport is easily reached by major and regional airlines that connect through Boise, Seattle, Portland or Salt Lake City. ***The Red Lion Inn does provide free transfer service to/from the airport from 8am to 9pm. Otherwise taxi service is about \$12 each way.*

Groups of two or more will probably find it more economical to fly to **Spokane, Washington** and then rent a car for the pleasant 100-mile drive south that takes about two hours. You can also take a taxi one-way to or from Lewiston for roughly \$200 for up to 4-5 people with luggage. We recommend DAJ Taxi (509) 228-7009 or ABC Taxi of Lewiston (208) 437-5237. Be sure to clarify how many are in your party and how much luggage you may have when reserving a taxi with them.

Last Minute Phone Numbers: If you need to reach ROW at the last minute, try our office first at 800-451-6034. The Red Lion Hotel can be reached at 208-799-1000

Gratuities: Here are some helpful guidelines on tipping. Your guide is a paid professional. Tips are appropriate and accepted only if we exceeded your expectations. Whether you tip and how much you tip should depend on your satisfaction with the trip, your feelings about tipping, and your financial means. If you believe your guide deserves a tip, a suggested range is from 7-12% of your trip cost. If you had the time of your life, then the sky is the limit! We also appreciate your comments. We use your feedback to recognize extraordinary guest service and to discover areas where we can make improvements. Our goal is to exceed your expectations! (P.S. Let us know if you found these guidelines appropriate or helpful.) Tips can be given to the ROW "Team Leader," who will distribute it equally among the crew.

ROW Inc. is an Equal Opportunity recreation service provider under permit from the U. S. Forest Service, Umatilla National Forest.