

Rescue Dynamics - Alpine Climbing
Meeting Details & First Morning Instructions
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The meeting time and place for the course is 7:00 am on the first morning of the course at the Morro Slabs Parking Lot. Look for one of three vehicles; white cargo van - CYM 044; black Toyota Forerunner - VE6 MTN; brown camper van - WJK 864. In case of emergency, you can try contacting us by cell phone on the first morning of the course at (780) 916-7951. Cell service is sporadic here. Try more than once.

Appended to this document is basic information on how to find accommodations near our climbing sites. Our climbing will be done east of Jasper between Jasper and Hinton. Common campsites that have been used by students in the past include Folding Mountain (just east of the Jasper park gates), Whistler (closest to Jasper) and Wapiti (next closest to Jasper) each of which have showers. More primitive camping is found at Pocahontas and Snaring Campgrounds. Motels and other accommodations can be found at the Folding Mountain Resort or in the townsite of Jasper. You should only book to stay there for one night as we move locations for the second day.

Be sure when you meet the group at 07:00 that you have finished breakfast, you have gas in your vehicle, your lunch is packed and your pack is packed with the exception of group items of equipment. You should be all ready to go.

The first items of business will be a bit of paperwork. We will require that everyone sign a copy of the waiver that will be witnessed by your instructor. The Association of Canadian Mountain Guides under the advice of their legal counsel has recommended that we undertake this practice. Given that most of the waivers are sent via fax, email, etc. and are often incomplete or illegible we have decided to comply with their recommendation.

If you paid by VISA or MasterCard over the phone, by fax or electronically we will also require an imprint of your credit card together with your signature so that we have an original copy in our files. This reduces fraud but even more importantly reduces the price of your course because this practice allows the credit card company to charge us a lower rate for their services.

After the paperwork is completed the group will travel to the location for the first day of climbing. Your instructor will likely choose to hand out equipment at the parking lot near the climbing site. You will be given a selection of personal and group gear that you be responsible for during the course. It must be returned in good condition at the end of the course. You may also be required to carry a rope.

All of the climbing is done in Jasper National Park. You must have a valid Park Vehicle Group Pass or Personal Pass to attend this course, as we are traveling and climbing in National Park areas. Your Pass also entitles you to mountain rescue service should a mishap occur. Without it you may be liable for the cost of any technical rescue. Be sure to purchase one when you first enter the Park if you do not already have one. It is MANDATORY. The Park Pass does not cover ambulance, hospital or other related expenses, for which you require your own medical insurance.

The first morning will be spent doing knots, rope-handling and introductory short-roping near *Morro Slabs*. This popular climbing area may be shared with other groups. You are in a National Park and it belongs to us all! Share the area and treat it with respect. Don't litter and pick up any litter you may see.



To get to Morro Slabs from Hinton or Folding Mountain: Drive West along Highway 16 past Folding Mountain and enter Jasper National Park. Continue along Highway 16 for about 20 minutes until just before the highway crosses the Athabasca River. Just near the water's edge (50 to 100 meters from the river) on the south side of the road there is a small paved parking lot. You will be along a section of highway posted at 70 km/h. If you cross the Athabasca River

you have gone a little too far. The parking lot is shown in the photo. The climbing area is only five minutes away, but we meet at the cars.

To get to Morro Slabs from Jasper: Drive east on Highway 16 (toward Hinton) for about 20 km. Immediately after crossing the Athabasca River on the south side of the road is a small paved parking lot shown in the photo above. We meet here.

In the event of rain or other foul weather your instructor may decide on an alternate location or conduct knot tying and related activities in one of the picnic shelters at a campground or perhaps under a tarp or in the trees near Morro Slabs.

If the weather is good on the first afternoon of the course we will move to a new location. If the weather is poor we may stay at Morro Slabs or move another location. Your instructor will advise you of how the program will proceed as the day goes on. It is weather based so be patient.

The normal location for the afternoon of the first day is Hidden Valley. This is another fairly popular rock climbing venue but it is far more expansive than Morro Slabs. It has over 100 climbs that vary in length from 20 meters to 150 meters. It takes about 45 minutes of walking uphill to get to where we will start our climbing. Given good weather and a strong group, the intention will be to do a multi-pitch climb in the afternoon involving rock climbing, short-roping and a possible short-roping and rappel descent. This involves many of the components of a real alpine rock climb in a setting that allows easy escape if the weather turns bad.

Given good weather, we usually drive to the Hidden Valley Parking Lot for lunch. It is located about half way between the Jasper Park east gates and Morro Slabs. We usually drive as a convoy to the parking area but in case you get separated from the group: *To get to Hidden Valley from Morro Slabs:* Drive east along Highway 16 (toward Hinton) for approximately 16 km. On the east side of the road is a large paved parking lot bordered by ponds on each side. Look for the instructors vehicle to show you where it is best to park.



Once you are there, Syncline ridge is visible in the background (see photo above). Roche Miette is no longer visible once you are at the Parking Lot. Look for your instructor!

We try to end the first day of the course relatively early if possible as we have a lot of travel to do to get ourselves in position for the second day. The second day of the course typically involves a rock, snow and ice ascent with glacier travel, short-roping, possibly a little rock climbing and other techniques. Since we are traveling on a glacier, everyone must have completed a Basic Snow & Ice Course as a prerequisite to attending alpine climbing.

Some of the best snow and ice climbing in North America is at the Columbia Icefields, and this is where we will be going for day two. It is over an hour south of Jasper on Highway 93 so you should have a *quick* supper in Jasper at the end of day one then fill our vehicle with gas and start driving south to the Columbia Icefields area as soon as practical. There are no gas stations between Jasper and the Icefields and no gas station at the Icefields.

You also will need to find a campsite and the later you leave it the less likely you are to find a spot. The two closest campsites to our climbs are the "Icefields Campground" which is a very tightly packed little campground just south of the Columbia Icefields Chalet and the Wilcox Creek Campground which is a bit more spacious. Wilcox Creek is only a few minutes past the Icefields Campground. These campgrounds do not accept reservations.

Since this is a true alpine climb we need to have a true alpine start. This means you must have eaten breakfast, be packed and meet the group typically by 04:00 AM. This is really early for most people. Your instructor will give you the meeting time and place for day two at the end of the first day.



Given good weather and a strong group, the second day of the course will be an attempt at a summit climb. We often attempt A2, a 10,000 foot peak near the boundary of Jasper and Banff parks. Depending on the level of the course, prevailing conditions and participant skill levels, your route may vary. In poor weather or bad conditions we have often completed Boundary Peak instead. Our website has photo essays about these peaks that you can view online if you like. It is highly recommended in preparation for this course.

As mentioned above, climbing snow and ice peaks requires early starts to capitalize on good conditions in the cooler part of the day. The summit day will usually require a meeting time at the appropriate parking lot of around 04:00 AM. Your guide / instructor will give you the exact meeting time and place the day before the climb as it will depend upon day to day conditions. If the weather, conditions or group readiness are deemed by the guides to be inappropriate or unsafe then alternate activities will be planned (usually skills practice).

Climbing big peaks has inherent dangers and the guides must be free to make appropriate decisions without any outside pressure. They also have the right to turn back for any group management, safety or time related concern at any time on a climb. Their decision to climb or not is final. The summit is NOT a guarantee.

Be sure when you meet the group that you have finished breakfast, you have gas in your vehicle (closest gas station is Saskatchewan Crossing), your lunch is packed and your pack is packed with the exception of group items of equipment. You should be all ready. Have clothing for cold weather and/or rain. This is the Icefields!

If you have any further questions, please call (780) 461-5040 or email us at rescuedynamicsinfo@telusplanet.net or visit the website at www.RescueDynamics.ca

Camping and Accommodation Options for Rescue Dynamics Courses in Jasper National Park (updated April 16, 2007)

For access to listings of hotels, motels and hostels in Jasper National Park visit:

http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/jasper/visit/visit2_e.asp#Accommodations

Jasper National Park Selected Campgrounds - 2007

Campground reservations can be made at Jasper National Park in the following campgrounds: Whistlers, Wapiti, Wabasso, Pocahontas, For details visit: http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/jasper/visit/visit19_E.asp

Campground	Location from Jasper town site	Open	Close	PWS	ELEC	UNS	PRIM	SHO
Whistlers	3.5 km south	May 4	Oct 8	77	100	604		X
Wapiti	5.4 km south	May 18	May 21		40	322		X
		June 15	Sep 3		40	322		X
Wapiti Winter	5.4 km south	Oct 08	May 9 2008		40	53		
Wabasso	16.5 km south	June 21	Sep 3			228		
Pocahontas	45 km east	May 18	Oct 8			140		
Snaring River	13 km east	May 18	Sep 17				66	
Columbia Icefield	106 km south	May 18	Oct 8				33	
Wilcox Creek	107.5 km south	June 08	Sep 10				46	

PWS: Power, Water, Sewer

ELEC: Electricity

UNS: no hook-ups, flush toilets

PRIM: dry toilets

SHO: showers

Folding Mountain Resort (East of Jasper Park east gates)

In addition to the above noted campgrounds and facilities in Jasper Park, many students have stayed at the Folding Mountain Resort in the past. Folding Mountain Resort has serviced and un-serviced RV and tent campsites, motel rooms and bungalows. Folding Mountain is located west of Hinton, outside of Jasper National Park, just east of the Jasper Park East gates. Reservations can be made by calling 1-866-475-3737. Basic information can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.albertadirectory.net/foldingmtn/>