



river trips

# The Illinois

4 day rafting trip



## 5

### best things about the Illinois

- World-class whitewater
- Extreme remoteness
- Beautiful aquamarine water
- Waterfalls
- Green Wall

### SPECIFICS

Length in days: 4

Length in miles: 34

Overall difficulty: IV+

Highest difficulty (#): V (4)

Rapids/day: ~15

Gradient: 26 feet/mile

Signature Rapid:

Green Wall

Types of boats:

Oar-paddle combination

Minimum recommended age: 16

- Rapids: ★★★★★
- Scenery: ★★★★★
- Wilderness: ★★★★★+
- Swimming: ★
- Hiking: ★★★★★
- Campsites: ★★★★★
- Wildlife: ★★★
- Fishing: ★

## 5

### best things about ARTA

- Friendly, fun & gracious guides
- Active, engaging & informal style
- Steadfast commitment to safety

Over 50 years of experience on the west's most iconic rivers

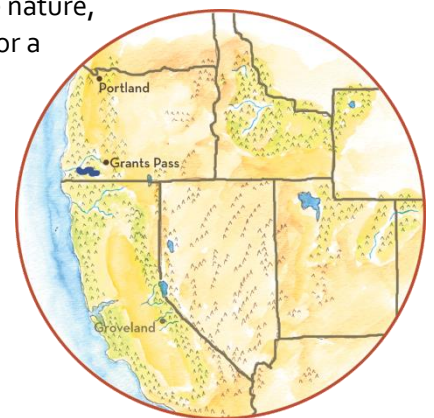
We donate our profits back to protecting the environment



## The wildest river we run

The Illinois is a beautiful, remote, and dynamic river with its headwaters high in the Siskiyou Mountains of Northern California. Flowing north through the Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area, the river cuts a steep and isolated canyon to its confluence with the Rogue River, approximately 35 miles from the Pacific Ocean. The 34 mile section that we run is protected as a Wild and Scenic River and contains some of the most challenging whitewater in the west. It also contains some of the most exquisite scenery in the world. Numerous side creeks cascade directly into the river; deep, blue-green pools burst into sparkling whitewater; giant house-sized boulders and steep cliffs pinch the river through narrow passages; and colorful wildflowers bloom on shore. Adding to this spectacle of scenic wonder are rapids which can hold their own against any on the continent; York Creek, Submarine Hole, Prelude and the Illinois' signature rapid, Green Wall, are just a few of the many rapids that we will encounter.

The Illinois is a secluded, remote, and rarely run river with wide variations in its flow. Due to its difficulty, isolation, and unpredictable nature, it is best suited for experienced rafters looking for a challenging adventure. This is a challenging trip in a remote and inaccessible canyon; everyone should be physically fit, agile, coordinated and healthy.



*"Perfect. Amazing. Awesome.  
From start to finish."  
- Brian Gorgas*

# The Illinois ~ logistics



## 4 day rafting trip

### Meeting Place

Holiday Inn Express  
105 NE Agness Ave  
Grants Pass, OR 97526

### Meeting Time

8:00 pm the day before your launch date.

### Return Time

Between 5:00 and 6:00 pm on the last day of your trip.

### Pre-trip checklist

- **Complete on-line registration**  
(follow the directions and link that came with your original reservation)
- **Reserve pre- & post-trip lodging**  
(most people stay at Morrison's; other options are listed to the right).
- **Plan for the unexpected**  
(purchase Travel Insurance through [USI Travel Insurance](#)).
- **Gather and pack your gear**  
(there is a complete list on the Equipment page; call if you have any questions).

### What we provide

- Transportation from Grants Pass to the river back to Grants Pass.
- Friendly, entertaining and professional guide service.
- All meals from lunch on the first day to lunch on the last day.
- All taxes and government access fees.
- Waterproof bags, lifejackets and other specialized river touring equipment for the trip.

### What you are responsible for

- Transportation to Grants Pass before your trip.
- Meals and lodging before and after your trip.
- Personal clothing and toiletries (see Equipment page).
- Camping equipment (sleeping bags and tents can be rented from ARTA - see Equipment page).
- Soda, wine, alcoholic beverages (see Details page).
- Guide gratuities

### Where and when to meet

We'll meet you at 8:00 pm the evening before the trip begins in the lobby of the Holiday Inn Express in Grants Pass, Oregon (800/838-7666). At the pre-trip meeting we will give you your waterproof bags, go over final trip logistics and answer any last minute questions. The following morning you will leave your vehicles at the Holiday Inn and we will transport you to the river (3 hours). At the conclusion of the trip we will return you to the Holiday Inn (5 hours).

### How to get there

**Driving:** Grants Pass is located on Interstate 5 about 55 miles north of the Oregon-California border; 6-7 hours from San Francisco, and 12-14 hours from Los Angeles. To get to the Holiday Inn Express, take the South Grants Pass exit, (#55), and head west towards town on Grants Pass Parkway. Take the first right onto Agness Ave. and the motel will be on your right.

**Flying:** Horizon/Alaska, and Skywest/United serve Medford, Oregon, which is about 30 miles southeast of Grants Pass. For van transportation from the Medford airport to Grants Pass, contact Galice Resort (541/476-3818). Due to potential delays, we do not recommend flying out of Medford the evening that the trip ends.

### Where to stay

Overnight accommodations for both before and after the trip are good at either the Holiday Inn Express (800/838-7666 or 541/471-6144) or the Best Western Inn Grants Pass (800/553-7666 or 541/476-1117) which is right next door. Reservations should be made well in advance.

### Other things to do in the area

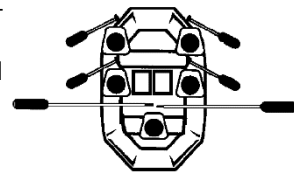
The Oregon Shakespeare Festival in nearby Ashland is renowned for its repertoire of Shakespearean drama. Also in the area are Crater Lake National Park and Oregon Caves National Monument. For those trip members who are driving, we will be getting off the river about 35 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean at Gold Beach. If you want to continue your vacation with a visit to the Oregon coast, you can have your vehicle shuttled to the take-out and be at the ocean the evening your trip concludes. Arrangements can be made at the pre-trip meeting.

### Weather

The weather on the Illinois has the potential to be rainy and cold with highs in the 60s and lows in the 40s. It doesn't rain all the time (we've gotten lucky with sunny skies and temperatures in the 80's!) but you should be prepared for wet weather. The water temperature is in the 50s.

### Types of boats

The difficulty of the Illinois makes it perfect for oar-paddle combination rafts. 14 or 16 feet long, these rafts are configured to allow 2 or 4 paddlers to assist a guide who rows using 10 foot oars. You will be actively paddling and maneuvering the raft through the rapids.



### Tipping

If you truly enjoy your trip, tipping is a great way to show your appreciation. Tipping is optional and personal, but since a lot of people ask, a customary amount is between 10 and 15 percent of the trip cost. Tips can be given to the Lead Guide who will share them with the entire crew. And the entire crew will appreciate them and put them to good use. (And thank you.)

# The Illinois ~ equipment

4 day rafting trip



## Get ready!

The weather on the Illinois River is unpredictable; everyone should come prepared for cool, sunny days and cold, rainy days. Being prepared with the proper gear will make your trip much more enjoyable, so take the time to get the right stuff. Space is at a premium so bringing appropriate items, not more items, is the key; two fleece pullovers are much more compact and versatile than six cotton sweatshirts. The following list and packing advice are designed to help you decide on and find the right gear. Please follow it closely and call if you have any questions as you go through this list; we want you to have the best trip possible.

## PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST

**CAMP ITEMS - These will be packed in your dry bag and will generally not be accessible during the day.**

- \*Compact sleeping bag, (down or synthetic, rated to 35°)
- \*Closed-cell foam or self-inflating sleeping pad, (ensolite, Thermarest, or air mattress)
- \*Sleeping bag liner or flat bed-sheet (perfect for hot nights and will add warmth on cold nights)
- \*Small tarp or groundcloth
- \*Compact, lightweight tent, (free-standing work better)
- Your favorite pillow (an extra pillow-case is handy for organizing stuff in your bag)
- 2 complete changes of clothing (versatile pants and shirts, cotton is fine - something exciting for dinner is welcome!)
- Warm jacket, (thick fleece is great - will work on-river as well or compact, durable coat)
- Good rain gear, (can double as on-river gear); top is essential, bottoms are advised
- Extra socks, (wool or fleece are best), and underwear
- Camp shoes, (running shoes, tennis shoes; something you can walk and hike in comfortably)
- Small towel, soap and shampoo (*Campsuds* & *Dr. Bronner's* are the most environmentally friendly, Ivory is fine)
- Personal hygiene items, including medicine, insect repellent, dry-skin lotion, etc. Please bring twice the amount needed of any essential medicine.
- Small flashlight with extra batteries, (headlamps are great)

**RIVER ITEMS - These will be worn or packed in your personal semi-dry day bag and WILL be accessible during the day.**

- **Base layer** (comfort): swimsuit and polypro pants/tights and long-sleeved polypropylene shirt.
- **Insulation layer** (warmth): thick fleece top, (pullovers work best)
- **Outer layer** (waterproof): wetsuit or drysuit. ARTA will provide wetsuits; if you have your own wetsuit or drysuit, you should bring it. No one has ever regretted renting a drysuit, (see next page for information)
- **Outer layer** (waterproof): splash jacket or dry-top. ARTA will provide splash jackets; if you have your own dry-top, you should bring it.
- **Outer layer** (fashion): shorts to wear over your wetsuit
- **On your feet** (protection): shoes or sandals that will stay on while swimming and are comfortable to hike in. No flip-flops, slip-ons or aqua shoes for on the river.
- **On your feet** (warmth): wetsuit booties, neoprene, fleece or wool socks under your shoes
- **On your head** (warmth): a fleece or wool beanie (you will be wearing a helmet)
- **On your hands** (warmth): neoprene gloves or dishwashing gloves over fleece gloves, (surprisingly effective)
- Lightweight cotton or synthetic clothing for sun protection
- Waterproof sunscreen/block (SPF 30), lip balm
- Sunglasses with strap, (maybe not your best pair)
- Small water bottle, 1 quart, (essential - even if it's just an empty plastic Gatorade bottle)

**OPTIONAL ITEMS - These are not necessary, but you are welcome to bring them.**

- Waterproof camera, (if you want to bring your cell phone to use as a camera, we strongly recommend getting a sturdy case such as an Otter Box or EscapeCapsule)
- Beer, wine, liquor, or soda in unbreakable containers
- Locking carabiner, handy for securing your day-bag
- 1 or 2 plastic garbage bags & zip-lock bags for organizing gear
- Sarong (very versatile)
- Book, sketch pad, journal, etc.

\* These items are available to rent from ARTA and can be reserved when you fill out your on-line registration.

Underlined items are the preferred choice of our professional river guides!

ARTA WILL PROVIDE: a chair, cup, plate and eating utensils for each guest.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING: Valuable jewelry, radios, guns, or any irreplaceable items!



# The Illinois ~ life on the river



4 day rafting trip

## Professional Tips

Our **dry-bags** are great for keeping things dry but are somewhat awkward for packing and living out of. Compact sleeping bags are much more convenient, and small stuff sacks or zip-lock bags are helpful for dividing up your stuff inside the bag. Trying to put your entire duffel bag or rolling luggage into the dry-bag never seems to work.

**Drysuits** are fully waterproof coveralls with latex seals at the neck, wrists and ankles (or with waterproof socks!); like a giant, waterproof onesie. They are much warmer than a wetsuit and are great on the Illinois where wetsuits don't always dry out each evening. They are very expensive to buy, reasonable to rent for an Illinois trip. Pacific River Supply (510/223-3675).

"**Fleece**" is a generic term for a spun, polyester fabric developed for outdoor use. It is thick and fluffy and does not absorb water, making it ideal insulation on a river trip. It is commonly called Polartec or Polarfleece. "Polypropylene" is a thinner, stretchier, woven variation used predominately for long underwear. Any polypropylene long underwear will work; heavy-weight is the most versatile.

**Layering your clothing** is an effective way to adjust to the daily weather changes that you will encounter. A light polypropylene layer under a heavy fleece top under a rainshell will get you going on the chilliest of mornings and allow you to shed layers as the day warms up.

Our guides say that one of the most versatile things to bring on a trip is a **sarong**. Comfortable and colorful, sarongs get used for quick clothing changes, beach throws, sun screens and dinner celebrations.

## A day on the river

One of the joys of our trips is their pace; we're going to encourage you to leave your watch behind and find the natural rhythm of life on the river. Each day is different and will be adjusted to accommodate water levels and weather conditions. After hot coffee and a hearty breakfast we'll raft for a few hours, stop for a picnic lunch and then head downriver for a couple more hours of adventure. There are some really cool hikes on the Illinois and if we have time we'll take a break to stretch our legs. We're usually off the river in the late afternoon and appetizers and dinner are served at the perfect time in our riverside dining room. Nightfall in the canyon is magical and we'll enjoy it for as long as we can before heading to bed and falling asleep to visions of the river and sounds from the canyon.

## How to dress

**On the river:** Think layers. The key to being comfortable on the Illinois is being dry and adaptable; a thin synthetic layer (polypro) next to your skin with a thick synthetic layer (fleece) over it with a waterproof layer (wetsuit and splash jacket or drysuit) over that seems to work the best. Feet and hands get cold easily and we suggest wetsuit booties or neoprene socks under sturdy shoes and neoprene gloves. Cotton is worthless when wet and should not be used for on-river insulation. Drysuits are great and can be rented from Pacific River Supply (510/223-3675) for about \$100 for the week.

**In camp:** Think dry. The Illinois River canyon is a wet place, even when it isn't raining. Staying dry in camp is important. You will want a sturdy waterproof rainshell and rainpants, (not a windbreaker) and good insulation; our guides bring gore-tex shells, puffy down jackets and fleece hoodies. Campsites often have wet grass, so waterproof shoes (like LL Bean boots) are nice for keeping your socks dry and your feet warm. Cotton is o.k. for camp stuff, but because it is worthless for keeping you warm on the river, many people bring two sets of fleece and have a backup in case one gets drenched.

## How to pack

**Camp items** will go in a watertight dunnage bag provided by ARTA, (one per person). These are generally not accessible during the day. The bags are roughly 17 inches in diameter and 24 inches tall, (the size of a large duffel bag; plenty big, but you should try to limit all of your gear to about 25 pounds). We will show you how to close the dunnage bag so that it stays watertight even if temporarily submerged, but packing your sleeping bag in a garbage bag provides extra protection. Zip-locks, stuff sacks, and pillow cases are good for keeping track of small and/or wet things.

**River items** will go in a semi-watertight, personal dry-bag provided by ARTA, (one per person). These bags are 9 inches in diameter and 12 inches tall, perfect for rain gear, fleece, sunblock, and other things you want to keep handy during the day. The bags are marginally waterproof so for expensive cameras or other things that must stay dry we recommend a small Pelican Box which can be found online and at outdoor stores. If you want to bring your cell phone to use as a camera, please get a sturdy waterproof case such as an Otter Box or EscapeCapsule.

## How to find it

**Buy it:** Local mountaineering or sporting goods stores should have everything you need. Great selections of river gear are also available on-line through NRS and REI.

**Rent it:** We have good equipment available to rent. Reserve and pay for it in advance, pick it up at the pre-trip meeting, leave it behind when you're done. Simple.

**Sleep Kits** (polarguard bag, liner, self-inflating pad & tarp) are about \$10 per day.

**Tents** (two-person, free-standing, comfortable) are also about \$10 per day.

**Drysuits** can be rented from Pacific River Supply, 510-223-3675 or [www.pacificriversupply.com](http://www.pacificriversupply.com)