



# **New Vision Wilderness**

**THERAPEUTIC OUTDOOR PROGRAMS**

**Annual Operating Plan 2020  
Chequamegon National Forest  
Medford Ranger District  
Special Use Permit: MED004**

**NVW Newco, LLC**

Name of Outfitter/Guide Company

**Ben Koch**

Designated Agent

**W10649 Perkinstown Avenue**

**Medford, WI 54451**

Address

**(715) 748 - 0251**

Telephone Number

**Chequamegon-Nicolet**

National Forest

**Medford**

Ranger District

When signed by both the Special Use Permit holder and the Forest Service authorized officer, this operating plan becomes part of the permit. This plan is the key basis upon which the outfitter's performance will be evaluated annually. The authorized officer must approve in advance any changes to the operating plan.

Plan prepared by     *BK*      
Outfitter or designated agent

Date     1/16/20    

Plan reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Outfitting administrator

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Plan approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized officer

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## NVW Newco, LLC Business Overview

### History

New Vision Wilderness, LLC was an entity formed in the state of Wisconsin. It was incorporated in August of 2007 by founders Drew Hornbeck and Steve Sawyer. This is the entity that has successfully held the special use permit MED004 in collaboration with the Medford Ranger District.

Due to the effectiveness of our program, our census grew quickly. In an effort to limit growth in the Chequamegon program and in order to give more access to a wider variety of clients in need, New Vision West, INC was founded in 2012 as a second location of New Vision Wilderness. New Vision West, INC has successfully operated in compliance with Special Use Permits through the Deschutes and Willamette National Forests as well as the Salem District of the Bureau of Land Management in Oregon.

In 2014, NVW partnered with CALO to form NVW Newco, LLC. Newco does business as “New Vision Wilderness”. Other than changing our primary legal entity to NVW Newco, LLC and adding CALO as a majority owner of NVW, there were no immediate or significant changes to our logo, name, branding, current management team, operating plans, daily operations, growth plans, client demographic, or other. CALO further partnered with a group of programs in 2018 to form Embark Behavioral Health, which is a partnership of mental health programs united in a mission to curb childhood depression and anxiety. Although NVW is a member program of Embark, NVW continues to operate with a focus on student and family needs in line with our initial founding principles.

Our intention is to develop the highest standard in therapeutic services to adolescents and their families who struggle with behaviors and relationships which stem from traumatic experiences. The treatment model combines clinically sophisticated treatment techniques and the power of the outdoors to build self-efficacy and skill development. This treatment strives to heal old wounds and improve family functioning.

### Mission Statement

New Vision Wilderness is committed to setting the standard in therapeutic outdoor programming. As an Embark program, NVW is joined in a mission to drive adolescent anxiety, depression and suicide from the all-time highs of today to all-time lows by 2028.

### Core Purpose

Create Joy and Health Generations

### Vision

To be the most respected, recognizable and valuable behavioral health company in the world.

## **Core Values**

Our core values help us to find people who are predisposed to the characteristics that will be successful in working towards our mission. As an organization, we all strive to exhibit the values of Empathy, Service, Trusting Relationships, and a Growth Mindset.

## **The New Vision Way**

Everything done at New Vision Wilderness is done with intention behind it. This philosophy has been instilled in the company since its inception. The name New Vision Wilderness has a double meaning:

1. We want every student that comes through our program to leave with a new outlook on life with a productive path to realize their new vision of themselves and their life.
2. We want to challenge the industry with a completely new approach to wilderness therapy. Everything we do at NVW is designed to align with and support our students in their therapeutic journey. We do not subscribe to a boot camp mentality as we recognize this will not be effective with our population. We utilize connection and rapport instead of reaching for consequences.

We pride ourselves on the effectiveness that our model has produced. New Vision Wilderness operates with physical and emotional safety of all participants as the first and foremost priority in all decisions made in this program. Examples of how the New Vision Wilderness Model is different include, but are not limited to:

- Conservative medical approach
- Conservative weather/environmental approach
- Low risk programming
- Commitment to investing in infrastructure to provide safe options
- Scheduled and highly accessible communication between field groups and management
- Individualized approach for each client's needs
- High clinical intensity to ensure emotional stability
- Small business with owner operated presence
- A mastery program in place of traditional level systems
- Educational focus
- Less focus on the physical demands and more focus on working therapeutically
- Thorough admission screening process to determine appropriateness for the program
- Expert wilderness instructors with proper certifications, training, and thorough assessments
- Trauma Informed Care Model
- Slowly expand comfort zones
- Hiking designed as a therapeutic tool rather than a challenge
- Meet or exceed all basic needs
- High quality and quantity of food

- High quality gear and clothing for all participants
- Desire for community connection in and out of the field area including community service and give back opportunities

We are committed to these differences because we believe that the differences that set us apart are the differences that create lifelong, productive change in our clients' lives. We believe wholeheartedly in the New Vision approach. Each employee that works here is trained on these philosophies. Core values are frequently discussed in group settings and clearly visible throughout our offices.

### **Affiliations**

New Vision Wilderness seeks to meet or exceed the expectations set forth by applicable licensing and accrediting bodies. We see value in measuring ourselves against industry standards to ensure quality of services. We are especially passionate about being one of the industry leaders in the effort of continually increasing the industry's professionalism and effectiveness.

New Vision Wisconsin maintains the following affiliation:

- Accredited member of Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Industry Council ([www.obhic.com](http://www.obhic.com))
- Accredited academic curriculum by AdvancEd
- Registered Charter School through Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Currently, our Wisconsin program is not eligible for state licensing as Wisconsin does not have a suitable regulatory background for licensing and monitoring Outdoor Behavioral Health programs. Although Wisconsin is not eligible for this affiliation, our sister program in Oregon maintains a set of affiliations that the Wisconsin program also strives to meet or exceed in our operations, including:

- Licensed by the state of Oregon, Department of Human Services as an Outdoor Youth Program
- National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs Affiliate Member ([www.natsap.org](http://www.natsap.org))
- Oregon State Marine Board Registered Outfitter

### **Biographies**

#### Drew Hornbeck, BA

Drew is the Co-Founder and President of New Vision Wilderness for both locations. His duties at both locations include Marketing, Program Development, Financial Planning, and Business Development.

Drew has a BA in Sociology from the University of Minnesota. For over 15 years he has been working in the field of Adventure and Wilderness Therapy. He has helped design and implement therapeutic programs across the country. Past positions include working as a Field Director at Trailhead Wilderness School in Colorado, a Wilderness Expedition Specialist at Raven's Way in SE Alaska, and as an Experiential Therapist at Rogers Memorial Hospital in Wisconsin. Over the span of his career Drew has worked with youth in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Colorado, Alaska, Montana, and Hawaii.

### Steve Sawyer, LCSW CSAC

Steve is the Clinical Director and Co-Founder of New Vision Wilderness at both locations. His responsibilities include training and supervising all therapists as well as overseeing all client treatment objectives.

Steve camped in the Chequamegon growing up. He is a licensed psychotherapist filled with passion and knowledge surrounding the intervention and change process. His experience comes from over a decade of intervention with tough to reach client populations in therapy settings ranging from residential, community based, outpatient and wilderness therapy. Steve currently serves on the board of The National Association of Therapeutic Wilderness Camping and writes for the Heartmath Institute.

### Alex Stavros, MBA

Alex is the CEO of Embark Behavioral Health and a Board Member of New Vision Wilderness. His primary responsibility is coordinating the collaboration efforts across the Embark Family of Programs.

Alex graduated with Honors from American University with both an Economic Theory and International Relations degree and he earned an MBA and Certificate of Public Management from Stanford's Graduate School of Business. Previously, he was the Founder and Managing Partner of a small private equity fund focused on making acquisitions of mission-driven businesses. Before that, Alex was the Associate Director of Firm Wide Operations at Cambridge Associates, the world's largest global investment advisory firm to not for profit organizations. Service to others has always been at the forefront of Alex's personal and professional ambitions.

## **New Vision Wilderness Programming Overview**

New Vision Wilderness is a clinically focused outdoor treatment program designed to help adolescents and young adults recover from difficult circumstances that have severely impacted their ability to maintain healthy relationships, utilize appropriate coping strategies and move forward from past traumatic events which have challenged their stability.

The program is on average 80 days in length and is categorized as a "Parent Choice" health care organization. We believe that in order to treat the individual, the entire family system should be treated. Therefore we make great efforts to incorporate family therapy sessions in each student's stay. Families may also spend time in the field with their loved ones so that deeper level understanding and stronger shared experiences will foster healthy relationships post-treatment.

We operate year-round. Students may enroll or discharge on any day of the week, so we try to keep our groups accessible by vehicle the majority of the time. They may go on short expeditions or other adventure activities as appropriate. During this time, students will participate in a personal growth program where they will learn how to:

- Create, pursue, and accomplish personal goals
- Develop and maintain healthy relationships with others
- Communicate feelings and related emotions/behaviors appropriately to peers and adults
- Increase self-esteem and decision-making skills
- Utilize the wilderness as a tool for learning
- Increase trust and respect for others and the environment

NVW is also an adventure program where students will learn how to:

- Plan, prepare, and participate in an intensive backpacking experience
- Be self-reliant in the backcountry (Including proper dress, gear upkeep and safety)
- Plan and prepare healthy meals
- Utilize low-impact camping techniques
- Better appreciate the inherent value of wild areas and solitude

All Participants are screened in a thorough admissions process to exclude any clients who have violent tendencies, exhibit psychotic behavior, have a history of felonies or assault, or are high risk for suicide attempts.

## New Vision Wilderness Operations Overview

Proposed operating dates for 2020 are: January 1<sup>st</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>

### User Days

From 10/1/17 to 9/30/18, NVW used a total of 7,102 user days in the permitted field area.

From 10/1/18 to 9/30/19, NVW used a total of 5,287 user days in the permitted field area.

\*\*\*See NVW FY19 Forest Service Use Numbers attachment

### Fee Determination

\*\*\*See NVW FY20 Fee Determination Considerations attachment

### Use Area

New Vision Wilderness (NVW) will operate annually on National Forest lands in the Chequamegon / Nicolet National Forest. Our proposed use includes:

- Ice Age Trail, all access points in Medford District, primarily between Hwy 13 and Hwy 64
- *Other areas to be determined in consult with Forest Service Permitting Official*

All major roads and trailheads between Highway 13 and Highway 64 will be utilized.

### Group Size

NVW maintains a group size of no more than 10 students and 3 staff. However, a group size of 8 students and two staff is preferable to increase supervision, individual attention, and minimize group impact on natural areas.

### **Staff Qualifications**

It is the philosophy of NVW to have the most highly trained staff and to be up on current issues and new certifications in the outdoor industry.

Our therapist spends 2-3 days each week in the field with the clients. Therapists must be a minimum of a Masters' level therapist. When they are not there, they are replaced by other skilled staff which may lead various clinical, hard skill or expeditionary trainings for our clients.

Our field guides work a rotating schedule of 8 days on and 6 days off, Tuesday to Tuesday. All full-time field staff operating in wilderness areas must have a minimum of:

- College degree in related field or commensurate experience
- Professional experience leading trips in a backcountry setting with youth
- Over the age of 21
- Hold current certification in first aid and CPR
- Understanding of low-impact camping practices

Field staff work in teams of two. At all times a team must have at least one staff with a current version of the following certifications:

- First aid, wilderness first aid, wilderness first responder, or E.M.T.
- Lifeguard certification. (If supervising water related activities: swimming, boating, etc.)

### **Activities**

New Vision Wilderness is primarily a backpacking program. In the summer, students hike and camp. In the winter, students snowshoe. NVW has developed components of canoeing, land stewardship, cross country skiing, dog sledding, equine therapy, environmental science-based activities, maple syrup boiling, and rock climbing. Of these activities, only camping, hiking, snowshoeing, canoeing, land stewardship, and cross-country skiing occur within the permitted area. The other activities occur outside the permitted area and we have made considerable infrastructure investments to be able to perform these activities off of the permitted area.

NVW's approach to education is to use the wilderness to illustrate environmental education, wilderness appreciation and resource management. Using the wilderness as a classroom allows for a more visual approach, which aids in education. NVW will use factual information along with individual research encompassing various wilderness topics. Forest service officials may also be used as resources for background knowledge of parks and recreational sites.



## Campsites

NVW groups will stay in a given campsite for no more than 4 nights, unless emergencies dictate otherwise. Campsites will be set up in a triangular form with kitchen, latrine, and tent sites at each point. We will primarily utilize pre-existing campsites that have already been impacted on some level. This includes use of existing tent pads, fire pits, and pit toilets. Leave No Trace techniques will be utilized on any new dispersed campsite utilized.

All efforts will be made to coordinate with the USFS to perform spring and fall campsite safety and resource impact inspections. NVW commits to developing a strategic, long term primary campsite rotation plan in close collaboration with the USFS in an effort to be stewards of the land. Appendix A lists the primary campsites NVW utilizes in the permitted area. NVW will continue meeting with Forest Service annually to determine most appropriate sites to be utilized in upcoming field season based on program needs with consideration to current conditions and planned management activities.

Leave No Trace Practices will be used at all campsites. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Utilizing campfires rarely, and only using dead and down wood. Metal fire pans are used in groups to reduce the impact on the ground
- Cooking on camp stoves to minimize use of wood
- Disposing of human waste greater than 200 feet from trails and bodies of water
- Group latrines of 10-12 inches will be used while in camp, and catholes of 6-8 inches will be used when on trail
- Toilet paper will be buried, burned, or packed out whenever possible
- Tents will be set up on soil as opposed to grass or foliage whenever possible
- Tent areas will be set up approximately 50 feet from kitchen areas. (as allowed by geography of the area)
- New LNT sites will be allowed at least 150 feet away from a trail/road or 200 feet away from any waters edge
- Packing out all trash. This includes our own and any we come across while on trail or in camp
- Use of a sump hole by the kitchen, dug 6-10 inches deep, where waste water from cooking will be drained. All food particles will be strained and packed out
- Naturalizing all campsites before leaving them so that it looks as if no one was there. This includes a camp sweep to double check we left no garbage, filled all holes, shifting leaves where tents had been, and returning objects such as stones and logs to their original position
- Trails and switchbacks will not be cut. LNT bushwhacking is permitted
- Food will be hung in a tree using a long rope and kept at least 5 feet from the trunk and 10 feet from the ground

- Drinking water gotten from streams and lakes will be boiled, filtered, or chemically treated to reduce the risk of giardia and other contaminants
- Campsites and trails may be marked using colored hunting tape while sites are being utilized. No other signage will be used and all will be removed upon vacating site.

### **Operations Policies**

The following policies shall be followed by all expedition groups:

- A minimum ratio of two staff to 10 students must be kept during all field operations
- A vehicle must be able to arrive at trailhead within 2 hours for all expedition groups for emergency purposes
- Staff members for groups must sign in at all USFS sign in boxes
- Access to an on call medical professional to consult on advanced medical cases
- All group and individual seasonal packing list items shall be accounted for

Each group will be carrying a full expedition gear which includes but is not limited to:

- 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit
- Headlamps
- Maps of the area and compasses
- GPS
- Waterproof matches or lighter
- Two, two-mile personal radios with weather capability
- 1 cell phone
- Whistle
- Hunters flagging tape
- Pen and paper
- Extra food and fuel
- Medical/Informational forms about students
- Extra batteries
- Set of keys to company vehicles and warming structures

All students will receive the basics of gear from NVW. This includes tents, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, backpacks, water bottles, mess kits, 1<sup>st</sup> aid supplies, meals, clothing, and cooking equipment.

Students will also be trained on wilderness safety (1<sup>st</sup> aid, hypothermia, frostbite, hydration), proper techniques for layering clothing, orienteering and map reading. While in the wilderness, students and all activities will be closely supervised by staff.

### **Operation Resources**

- During cold weather operations, NVW may utilize temporary frame/wall tents/tepees. These tents may not be left unattended nor erected and occupied for a period of more than 21 days at a time
- Properly certified sawyers that have been through the appropriate USFS training may complete community service. No other non-emergent use of a chainsaw will be permitted

### **Canine Therapy**

- NVW utilizes Canines to support our therapeutic intentions by creating the opportunity for a safe relationship. All Canines must have proof of required vaccinations, obedience training certificate, and training to the standards set by American Kennel Club and Canine Good Citizen. Catholes of 6-8 inches will be used to dispose of canine waste while in the field area. Canine food will be hung with group food in a tree 5 feet from trunk and 10 feet from the ground. USFS guidelines will be followed for canine practices including on leash protocols.

### **Emergency Response**

In the case of an emergency, any and all program resources that may be deemed necessary will be utilized. This may include chainsaws, snowmobiles, UTVs, or any other resources we deem to remediate the emergency.

In the event of an evacuation/injury:

- Senior field staff will lead the evacuation effort and determine if outside resources are needed.
- Parents will be notified. USFS District Ranger will be notified within 48 hours of event and Local Sheriff as necessary.
- Internal investigation to be launched to determine cause of evacuation/injury.

In the event of a lost student:

- Every attempt will be made by the field staff to search for the student. Other students may be used but must be accompanied by an adult. Senior field staff to lead search effort.
- If after three hours student cannot be found, New Vision Wilderness Executive Director (ED) must be notified. ED will decide when local Sheriff Office, local Ranger District, student's parents will be notified. No longer than 5 hours may pass.
- At this time a search will be executed using all available agencies.

### **Other Resource Considerations**

We wish to aid in trail upkeep, resource management, invasive species remediation, or any other needs identified by the USFS. From 10/1/18 to 9/30/19, we completed 169.25 hours of service projects in the

permitted field area. With limited large projects in the field area, our hours were more limited this year as well and we anticipate increased opportunities to support trail maintenance this coming year. We have built a relationship with the IATA and we hope to continue collaborating with the USFS to continue to develop our capacity for trail maintenance and improvements. We believe giving back to the community is an important value to instill in our clients through this volunteering.

**Appendix A**  
**New Vision Wilderness**  
**CNNF Campsite Coordinates**

This is the current list of campsites that NVW plans on utilizing during the 2019 operating season. Campsite names are NVW terms that the clients and staff have coined. These represent the general region of campsites we utilize within the permitted field area. Some previously mentioned campsites (e.g. Jerry Lake) have been removed from our present campsite list. Each coordinate location refers to a general campsite area where we are identifying multiple campsite locations for use in a three-year rotation.

<b>Campsite Name</b>	<b>2019 Location</b>	<b>Anticipated 2020 Location</b>
Dirt	N45.21901 W90.57234	N45.21721 W90.57596
Horsefly	N45.18305 W90.58661	N45.18249 W90.58552
Lake 11	N45.17868 W90.58653	N45.18092 W90.58507
Lego	N45.25909 W90.50107	N45.25613 W90.49819
North Beaver	N45.24984 W90.50437	N45.24881 W90.50749
Oz	N45.16653 W90.63239	N45.16681 W90.63028
Panda	N45.28649 W90.50771	N45.28461 W90.50673
Porcupine	N45.27350 W90.52632	N45.27639 W90.52639
Ranch	N45.17630 W90.58810	N45.17751 W90.58509
Sailor Creek	N45.27194 W90.56260	N45.27220 W90.56675
Scorpion	N45.22639 W90.59333	N45.22917 W90.59000
South Leopard	N45.17235 W90.61755	N45.17189 W90.61990
Stinkbug	N45.17823 W90.61164	N45.18060 W90.60917
Stranded	N45.14722 W90.67671	N45.15113 W90.67556
Treebeard	N45.18175 W90.57953	N45.17980 W90.57715
Wolf	N45.26683 W90.54611	N45.27167 W90.54528
Yellow River	N45.25397 W90.58750	N45.25291 W90.58387

