Expedition Cruise to Arctic Norway
July 8–18, 2016

Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen

With David Larson,
Director of Mass Audubon’s Birder’s Certificate Program

To get more details and reserve your space – call Mass Audubon at 800-289-9504 or email: koneill@massaudubon.org
**PURE EXCITEMENT**

**“Polar bear at 2 o’clock!”**

When the first polar bear sighting is announced over the ship’s public address system, the excitement in the air is palpable. People drop whatever they are doing and rush outside (often without their coats!) to the ship’s decks, cameras in hand, with the anticipation of a kid on Christmas morning. Seeing a polar bear in the wild—especially with an Arctic backdrop as magnificent as Spitsbergen—will literally take one’s breath away. It’s that thrilling.

You might think the excitement level settles down a bit when subsequent bear sightings are announced, but that’s not the case. Each time we see a bear, the situation is a little different. It could be a bear swimming in open water between ice floes, a bear hunting or feeding on a seal, a mother bear with cubs of the year trailing close behind, a large male chasing other bears or—as was the case on one of our cruises—a polar bear playing with a basketball-size block of ice!

Many of our polar bear sightings take place as our ship cruises along the pack ice edge. This is prime polar bear habitat. Curious bears often approach the ship to investigate, affording us exceptional close-up views and photo opportunities. Other sightings take place while we’re in Zodias (inflatable landing craft) cruising by glaciers, small icebergs and along the shoreline. Each encounter is unique and sure to get your heart racing!

Among the most excited by polar bears sightings are the naturalists who will lead this cruise—Wayne Lynch, Gary Alt, Dennis Mense and David Larson. Combined, they have seen thousands of polar bears on hundreds of trips to the Arctic, but this has not dampened their excitement the slightest bit. Their enthusiasm is bound to rub off on every trip participant as they help interpret all that we see through formal and informal lectures, as well as during our shore landings.

Polar bears are a main focus of our cruise, but that’s not to say we don’t seek out—and see—a great variety of other wildlife along the way. In addition to polar bears we are likely to see walruses and seals—swimming or hauled out on ice floes—reindeer, arctic foxes and minke, beluga and, occasionally, humpback whales.

Spitsbergen is also known for its enormous concentration of seabirds, including large colonies of dovecies, thick-billed murres and northern fulmars. As Arctic destinations go, there is no more easily-accessible location for viewing such a wide variety of wildlife.

In between wildlife sightings, you will be treated to Spitsbergen’s glorious Arctic scenery—massive glaciers, stunning fjords, colorful wildflowers, and rugged coastal mountains that rise up from the shoreline. We’ll have plenty of time to take in these sights. Be sure to bring plenty of extra storage disks for your cameras—you’re going to need them!

There is no northern place more beautiful or chockfull of wildlife than Spitsbergen!

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**YOUR ITINERARY**

**Day 1**
We begin our journey in Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen’s largest community. We embark the Polar Pioneer between 4 PM and 5 PM in the afternoon. As we steam westward out of Isfjorden, we encounter numerous seabirds, including dovecies, thick-billed murres, black-legged kittiwakes and, perhaps, a puffin or two. (D)

**Days 2–10**
These next nine days are dedicated to exploring the Svalbard Archipelago, especially the environs of its biggest and most spectacular island—Spitsbergen. Our exact day-by-day itinerary remains flexible, depending on local weather, ice and wildlife conditions, but the ship is totally at our disposal to go where and when we please. At the top of our “to do” list is polar bear watching. We head to the pristine pack ice to search for the great white bears and hope to encounter them swimming, hunting and inquisitively inspecting our ship. In addition to searching for bears, we spend our days discovering and learning about other wildlife, as well as the flora, geology and history of Svalbard. We are very likely to experience up close meetings with Svalbard reindeer grazing along mossy banks, walruses on land and amid the ice floes, arctic foxes, bearded and ringed seals, and, possibly, whales. Birdlife is abundant and throngs of wheeling seabirds, including millions of dovecies, are commonly seen. Other interesting High Arctic species include red-throated loons, barnacle and pink-footed geese, common and king eiders, long-tailed ducks, arctic terns, red phalaropes, purple sandpipers, ivory and glaucous gulls, long-tailed, pomarine and parasitic jaegers, great skuas, Atlantic puffins, black guillemots, rock ptarmigans and snow buntings. We have a remarkable amount of time available for wildlife viewing, exploring and taking photos in the 24 hours of daylight. (BLD)

**Day 11**
We arrive back in Longyearbyen during the night and disembark as a group after breakfast. (B)

We highly recommend arriving in Longyearbyen a day before embarkation and we offer an optional land package for your convenience.
CRUISE DESCRIPTION

If you want to see the Arctic in all its wildness and splendor, then a visit to Spitsbergen is a must! And there’s no more enjoyable and comprehensive way to see it than on our upcoming Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen cruise, July 8–19, 2016. Spitsbergen is the Crown Jewel of the Arctic. When we first visited the island more than a decade ago, clients and leaders alike predicted that Spitsbergen cruises would soon be on a par with such venerated nature and wildlife destinations as East Africa, Antarctica and the Galápagos. Clearly they were impressed with all they saw in Spitsbergen!

More than ten degrees north of the Arctic Circle, the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard comprises four large mountainous islands and hundreds of smaller ones. Spitsbergen—the largest island in the archipelago—has four settlements including Longyearbyen, the world’s most northerly town and the spot where our cruise begins and ends.

Unlike some cruises, there is no wasted “at sea” time—wildlife-viewing starts the moment the ship is underway. Our primary focus is navigating through the pack ice and into glacier-filled fjords in search of polar bears as the bears, in turn, hunt for ringed and bearded seals. On the northern edge of the archipelago, drifting pack ice crowds the shore and it is common to find polar bears hunting seals and walruses. The Norwegian Polar Institute has estimated that there are over 2,000 polar bears in the Svalbard region.

While seeing polar bears is reason enough to join our Spitsbergen cruise, there is much, much more to see and do! Our route along the pack ice will give us ample opportunity for sightings of several other marine mammals—viewed from the ship, but also when we go ashore in inflatable Zodiac landing craft. Species we commonly see—often at very close range—include walruses, reindeer (a subspecies called Svalbard reindeer), arctic foxes, bearded, ringed and harp seals, minke and, occasionally, humpback whales.

We’ll also use our Zodiacs to cruise along the foot of towering sea cliffs, home to tens of thousands of raucous seabirds. We are likely to see arctic terns, arctic skuas, Atlantic puffins, thick-billed murrels, dovekies, northern fulmars, long-tailed jaegers and more. All of these wildlife sightings are made in the relatively benign weather and calm seas of Spitsbergen’s summer.

Many of our trip participants are surprised by the colorful flora we see when we go ashore. The Gulf Stream creates a mild climate and when summer arrives the snow recedes to uncover verdant patches of green and red mosses and delicate wildflowers. Two national parks, 15 bird sanctuaries and two plant reserves protect half of Svalbard’s spectacular landmass.

There is no better way to experience the pristine beauty of the Arctic than on our Spitsbergen cruise. Join Wayne Lynch, Gary Alt, Dennis Mense, and David Larson on an unforgettable cruise to one of the most remote and uniquely beautiful locations on Earth. Be among the few lucky travelers to visit this spectacular Realm of the Polar Bear!

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After traveling with us to Spitsbergen, nature writer Kathryn True wrote:

“Last night a polar bear walked right up to the ship! It was a bright and sunny evening and we were parked in thin pack ice. We all hurried to the deck after the captain announced a polar bear in the distance. At first it looked like a glowing white snowball moving towards us. As it got closer you could see its determined walk, which seemed to say—'I've got to check this out.' The bear walked straight towards the ship without hesitation. About 30 yards away, he lifted his nose and moved his head back and forth sniffing the air, then continued towards us. As he got closer I could hear the crunching of his massive paws against the slushy layer of snow on top of the ice. We were all quiet on deck—except for the click of camera shutters we were awed into complete silence. He sniffed around the ship for about five minutes, then abruptly headed away from us, without so much as a backward glance! We felt so lucky to be there. The solitary life of a polar bear was never more poignantly clear.

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YOUR SHIP & CREW

The Polar Pioneer’s maneuverability and size are perfectly suited for small group polar expedition travel. This ice-strengthened research ship plied the waters of the USSR’s northern coast for many years and was refurbished in 2000 to provide comfortable, safe accommodations for 54 passengers.

The captain and crew are among the most experienced ice navigators in the world. The ship’s bridge and viewing decks offer excellent wildlife-viewing opportunities, while a fleet of inflatable Zodiaks transport passengers to shore for close-up wildlife viewing.

All cabins have outside portholes and ample storage space. A common area with a bar/lounge/library complements the simple and spacious accommodations. Meals are prepared by European chefs and served by Russian waitstaff.

DECK PLAN & FEES

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<tr>
<th>CABIN CATEGORY</th>
<th>CRUISE FEE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Triple (Shared bath)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suite (Private bath)</td>
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Cruise fees are per person and listed in US Dollars. Due to the remote location of this cruise, Emergency Evacuation Insurance is required. Information on how you can purchase this insurance will be included with your confirmation packet after you register for the trip.

WHAT’S INCLUDED:

- 10-night cruise on the Polar Pioneer
- All meals aboard the ship
- All excursions by Zodiac throughout the cruise
- Series of lectures and slide presentations throughout the cruise
- TravelWild Expeditions staff—all expert naturalist guides

Polar Pioneer

Polar Pioneer was built in Finland in 1982 as an ice-strengthened research ship and for many years she plied the treacherous waters of the USSR’s northern coast. In 2000 she was refurbished in St. Petersburg to provide comfortable accommodation for 54 passengers.

A combined bar/lounge/library area (stocked with a good collection of polar books) was also created by simple internal restructuring.

This class of vessel has a fine reputation for polar expedition cruising due to its strength, maneuverability and small number of cabins. All cabins have outside portholes plus ample storage space. The Russian captain and crew are among the most experienced ice navigators in the world and their enthusiasm is legendary.

The spacious bridge is always open to us and the decks are ideal for viewing. The chefs are European, and the dining room is attended by Russian stewardesses.

Polar Pioneer is not a luxury vessel, but it is a very popular ship for travel to the Polar regions. The accommodations are simple yet comfortable, and the meals are wholesome and uncomplicated. A small fleet of inflatable Zodiaks with outboard motors enable us to travel from ship to shore.
Registration Form

Please complete this form, sign the last page, and return to:
Mass Audubon Tours • 208 South Great Road • Lincoln, MA 01773

Tour ___________ Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen ___________ Departure Date ___________ July 8, 2016 ___________

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Name for Participant List and/or Name Badge ________________________________

Street Address ________________________________
(If PO Box, also give street address for FedEx deliveries.)

City __________________________ State/Country __________ Postal Code __________

Home Phone __________________________ Work Phone __________________________

Cell __________________________ Email __________________________

Date of Birth __________________________ Country of Birth __________________________ I prefer documents be sent by mail □
Month / Day / Year

Occupation __________________________ Male □ Female □ Smoking □ Non-Smoking □

Medical / Mobility Restrictions / Allergies / Dietary Requirements __________________________
(We assume no responsibility for medical care or for special dietary requirements.)

PASSPORT INFORMATION:

Name (exactly as it appears on your passport) __________________________

Last, First / Middle

Passport # __________________________ Issue Authority __________________________

Issue Date __________ Expiration Date __________ Citizenship __________________________
Month / Day / Year

EMERGENCY INFORMATION:

Emergency Contact __________________________ Relationship to Traveler __________________________

City __________________________ State/Country __________________________

Home Phone __________________________ Work Phone __________________________

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

Name of Roommate __________________________ Assign a Roommate if Possible □

Hotel Occupancy: Single Room □ Double Room (2 persons) □- Preference: One Bed □ Two Beds □

PAYMENT: (Leave blank if you already made your deposit.) Send credit card information for deposit by fax or mail. Our fax number is 206-463-5484. If scanning this form and sending electronically, leave the card number blank and phone credit card details to our office.

Deposit $ __________________________ Card # __________________________ Exp. Date __________
(VISA or MasterCard only)

If the billing address for this card is different from the address shown on the previous page, please write it below.

Signature __________________________ Date __________________________

Letter of confirmation will be mailed upon receipt of deposit. Reservations are accepted in the order received.
II. ENROLLMENT CONDITIONS

1. RESERVATIONS
The appropriate deposit (indicated below) & completed and signed Registration Forms are required to reserve a place for you. Deposits & trip payments may be made by check or bank transfer in US dollars. For trip deposits only, we accept Visa or MasterCard. Full payment of the trip fee is due on or prior to the designated day specified below, as well as is specified in the Initial Tour Information. If payments are not received when due, we reserve the right to treat your reservation as canceled, as if in writing, as per the cancellation and refund policy noted below. Trip fees are quoted in US dollars and must be paid in US dollars. No partial refunds are made for unused portions or services of a trip for any reason whatsoever. Trips are sold as a package only. This policy also applies to tour extensions & independent travel arrangements. Cancellation fees are not transferable.

2. CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS: The Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen
A deposit of 25% of the trip fee is required. An additional 25% of the trip fee is due on 9/11/15. Final payment is due on 2/1/16.
We must receive written notice of your cancellation, at which time the following fees are nonrefundable:

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<th>If Written Cancellation is Received:</th>
<th>Cancellation Fee:</th>
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<tr>
<td>9/14/15 or prior:</td>
<td>50% of deposit</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/15/15 to 1/4/16:</td>
<td>25% of trip fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/5/16 to 3/14/16:</td>
<td>50% of trip fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/15/16 or after:</td>
<td>100% of trip fee</td>
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3. TRIP CANCELLATION and EMERGENCY MEDICAL / EVACUATION INSURANCE
We strongly recommend purchasing trip cancellation (including emergency medical / evacuation) insurance to cover your travel investment.

Emergency medical / evacuation insurance is MANDATORY on this tour—please contact our office for details. An insurance brochure will be sent with your enrollment confirmation.

4. HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS
TravelWild Expeditions are within the capabilities of average people in good health. Some of these trips require the capability of walking for several miles over uneven trails, stepping from a small boat to a wave-washed rocky beach, flying in small planes and helicopters, and occasionally hiking at high elevations—all while carrying an assortment of gear. If you have concerns about your own capabilities and/or fitness as it relates to a trip, please inquire with our office before reserving a space. By forwarding a signed Registration Form and trip deposit, you certify that you do not knowingly have any physical or other conditions of disability that would create a risk for you or other trip participants and you agree to inform our office in writing if changes in your health occur any time prior to the tour. We reserve the right to request a doctor’s statement of good health. The company’s or trip leader's judgment shall provide the ultimate determination of an individual's ability to embark upon or to continue a trip. Once a trip has been confirmed, medical circumstances will not be considered as exceptions to our cancellation policy. We assume no responsibility for medical care or for special dietary requirements. Tour members are asked to refrain from smoking with or near the group.

5. CONTACT SCHEDULE
Participants will receive four mailings before the trip departs: 1. Initial Tour Information sheet confirms the deposit and provides pre-departure information. 2. Invoice for Second Payment. 3. Invoice/Practical Information provides clothing and gear recommendations, climate data, applicable health advisories and reading list. Visa information will also be included (if applicable). 4. Final Tour Information includes arrival instructions, itinerary revisions (if any), hotel addresses, trip telephone contact information and participant list. We provide the trip leader’s telephone number(s) and/or e-mail address with final documents so you can inquire about special questions you may have regarding your trip. We welcome your calls or e-mail messages to info@travelwild.com.

6. TRAVELWILD EXPEDITIONS COSTS
Information supplied upon enrollment describes the specific costs that are included in your trip fee. Generally these costs include lodging in double room occupancy, all meals (specified in the itinerary as BLD denoting breakfast, lunch or dinner), ground transportation during the trip in vans or small busses, air transportation as specified, meal and baggage tipping, and guide services provided by the trip leaders. Not included are airfare or other transportation from your home to the trip staging location, airport departure taxes, insurance, alcoholic beverages and bar expenses (plus bottled water and soft drink expenses on international tours outside of North America), tips and gratuities to local guides abroad, phone calls, passport or visa expenses, laundry or items of a personal nature. Gratuities to TravelWild Expeditions trip leaders are optional and always appreciated. Rates are based on group tariffs; if the trip does not have sufficient registration, a small party supplement may be charged.
Single accommodations are available for a supplemental cost in many locations; see the pre-departure trip information or call our office for details. You will be charged the single supplement fee if you desire single accommodations or if you wish to have a roommate, but one is not available. In some remote locations, clients with single rooms are infrequently compelled to share a room due to circumstances beyond our control. In such cases, appropriate per diem refunds will be made reflecting the direct cost of the single room at the facility where clients are required to share. There is no additional single supplement fee on ship-based cruises, if you request a roommate and one is not available.

Cost increases may occur unexpectedly due to rising costs of airfares, ground transport, fuel surcharges, accommodations and currency fluctuations, among others. TravelWild Expeditions may be compelled to amend prices, and we reserve the right to do so without prior notice. An increase in trip prices shall not be sufficient grounds for any refund of funds paid for the trip other than as determined by the terms of our cancellation policy.

7. LOGISTICS
Whenever possible, our trip participants are lodged in comfortable, modern hotels. We select among the best available accommodations, but refrain from extravagance. Some interesting destinations are far removed from modern amenities, however, and where necessary we will be accommodated in rustic country inns, cabins or tented camps.

Meals are always a special part of our trips for the camaraderie they engender and the opportunity they provide to try new foods from different areas. Depending on the trip and specific locale, participants order restaurant meals from the full menu or, less frequently, table d’hôte. Some trips include picnic lunches in the field. Fruit juice for breakfast and coffee or tea are included with the meals. Soft drinks are included with meals on tours within North America. Participants are responsible for their own bar tab (including bottled water, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages on tours outside of North America) at restaurant lunches and dinners.

Our itineraries are intended as examples only. Participants should allow for flexibility due to changes in weather, natural history or cultural events, or other logistical arrangements deemed necessary by TravelWild Expeditions or our leaders. The second tour leader (and any subsequent additional leaders) listed for each trip on the website will be added as the group size warrants. If only one space remains on a trip, and logistics permit, we accept two persons traveling together, even if it exceeds the trip maximum.

8. RESPONSIBILITY
TravelWild Expeditions and/or their Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel including, but not limited to, sightseeing, meals, lodging, transportation, and all other services whether by railroad, motorcar, motor coach, boat, ship or aircraft and they assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the trip.

They can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, volcanic eruption, terrorist acts, political unrest, quarantine or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as trip fees provide for arrangements only for the times and locations stated. Baggage is at the owner’s risk entirely.

The right is reserved to 1) substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary or transport where deemed necessary, or caused by changes in air schedules or equipment substitution; 2) cancel any trip prior to departure, in which case full refund of the paid trip funds will be given, but TravelWild Expeditions is not responsible for any other trip preparation expenses such as penalized or non-refundable air tickets, visa fees and medical related expenses; 3) substitute trip leader(s) for the leader(s) originally specified, in which case the substitution is not a basis for participant cancellation or refund other than provided by our normal cancellation policy; or 4) accept or retain any person as a member of any trip.

Trip prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect at the time of publication and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein.

A Registration Form including the Release and Assumption of Risk section must be signed by each participant prior to the commencement of the trip. Participation by any trip member will be declined in the absence of the signed Registration Form including the Release and Assumption of Risk section, with no trip fee refund. No modification to the Registration Form including the Release and Assumption of Risk section will be accepted.
Should TravelWild Expeditions, or anyone acting on their behalf be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, the enrolling trip participant(s) agree(s) to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs. In the event a lawsuit is filed, the enrolling participant(s) agree(s) to do so solely in the County of Lewis in the State of Washington. Certain ship owners require the use of pre-printed ticket forms that limit the ship owner's and operator's liability. When such tickets are used, the passenger is bound by the terms of these tickets with respect to the passenger's legal relationship to the owners and operators of the ship, their agents (TravelWild Expeditions), and the ship's crew.

III. ENROLLMENT CONDITIONS AGREEMENT & RELEASE & ASSUMPTION OF RISK

I have read, understand and agree to the terms, conditions and provisions of the Enrollment Information, as stated on the TravelWild Expeditions website and Section II of this form, especially noting the policy on cancellations, refunds, and limitations on responsibility.

I am aware that during any trip or tour that I am voluntarily participating in under the arrangements of TravelWild Expeditions, a Washington corporation, and its employees, agents and associates, certain risks and dangers exist while traveling in the United States, foreign countries, and wilderness areas in any country or territory that include the possibility of property damage, bodily injury and death. There is a possibility of accident or illness occurring without access to immediate or timely medical treatment or facilities. There is a risk of tropical or communicable diseases, food-related illnesses, the risk of personal injury and property damage or delay or inconvenience by forces of nature, wildlife or wildlife models, quarantine, political instability, acts of terrorism, strikes, government restrictions or regulations change, thefts, pilferage and the risk of accidents during travel while on foot or by aircraft, train, automobile, van, bus, boat, ship or other conveyance. I understand that such risks cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of this trip or tour. In consideration of, and as part payment for the right to participate in such trips, tours and/or other activities and services arranged for me by TravelWild Expeditions, its employees, agents and associates, I have and do hereby assume all risks, and hereby release TravelWild Expeditions, its employees, shareholders, agents and associates, and will hold them harmless from any and all liability, actions, causes of actions, debts, claims, and demands of every kind and nature, howsoever caused, which I now have or which may arise of or in connection with any of my trips or tours and participation in any activities arranged for me by TravelWild Expeditions, its employees, agents and associates.

On some ship-based trips, certain ship owners require the use of pre-printed ticket forms which limit the ship owner’s and operator's liability. When such tickets are used, I am bound by the terms of these tickets with respect to my legal relationship to the owners and operators of the ship, their agents (TravelWild Expeditions), and the ship's crew.

Should TravelWild Expeditions, or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this Agreement, I agree to indemnify them and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs. In the event a lawsuit is filed, I agree to do so solely in the County of Lewis in the State of Washington and further agree that the substantive law of that state shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict-of-law rules of that state. The terms hereof shall serve as a release and assumption of all risk for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, and for all members of my family.

If any part, article, paragraph, sentence or clause of this Agreement is not enforceable, the affected provision shall be curtailed and limited only to the extent necessary to bring it within the requirements of the law, and the remainder of the Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against TravelWild Expeditions, its employees, shareholders, agents and associates, on the basis of any and all claims from which I have released them.

I have had sufficient time to read this entire document, I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms.

Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Print Name ___________________________