

Ricky Haro

Biographical Information:

Ricky Haro is a backcountry specialist who owns and operates two specialized outdoor companies: Rare Earth Adventures and GroundTruth™. Ricky is also employed as the lead instructor and program developer in advanced backcountry skills for TATE Incorporated. He holds an AAS in Survival and Rescue through the Community College of the Air Force. He is currently seeking his B.S. in Workforce Education and Program Development through Southern Illinois University and is expected to graduate December 2007. He has been involved with the WEA since 2006 and has recently received his instructor certification. In addition, Ricky is heavily involved in the curriculum committee for the WEA. Ricky has been working as a full-time backcountry specialist since 1998 and has over 1200 days in the backcountry as a trip leader. His interests are moon-walking the Las Vegas Strip and pogo-sticking various alpine peaks.

Position Statement:

I would like to serve on the WEA Board of Trustees for many different reasons; the more prominent of which are outlined below:

1) Professionalizing our career:

With the increase in outdoor recreational activities and employment as recreational leaders, more people are being guided into the backcountry than ever before. Yet we as a profession have no occupational code or workforce certification other than what each university develops as a program. I firmly believe the WEA is the right venue for taking the first step in actually defining what a Backcountry Specialist (Outdoor Leader) is. The WEA has the ability to reach out at the entry level, workforce levels and to other associations to gather information that can be utilized to help develop core national standards and curriculum for apprentice, journeyman and craftsmen levels. All committees would have a heavy hand in this process. As a board member, I would strive to initiate and continue to see this endeavor through.

2) State of the Art Instruction:

Education in the 21st Century is extremely dynamic. As an instructional designer, I have been a part of developing state of the art instruction through the use of many technological venues. At the 2006 WEA Conference, my colleagues and I delivered a presentation on how technology can be utilized to cover knowledge-based objectives. I believe that the WEA is the perfect vehicle to drive outdoor instruction and methodology into the “wired age.” My vision is to create modules that allow any user to access the WEA website and complete “Steward” modules that develop awareness in protecting our precious environment, outdoor leadership as well as various backcountry skills. These modules will allow the WEA to “hit the masses” and create a marketing tool for other WEA programs.

If elected as a WEA Board Member, I aim to keep things highly democratic and involve as many people as possible to find the most appropriate solution. As a curriculum committee member, I have completed initiatives in due diligence and in a timely manner. In the past year, I have been a part of developing a white paper that proposes the WEA reduce the 18 point curriculum to 5 core content areas and helped develop a proposed WEA master training plan. As an established Backcountry Specialist, I don't need this accomplishment as a resume bullet. I have a strong and sincere desire to further my education in this field and continue to be a part of this profession as it moves forward.