



Dear Prospective Guest Group,

Thank you for inquiring about our Challenge Course Programs here at Westminster Woods. Westminster Woods is situated in the majestic redwood forest of west Sonoma County bordering the Dutch Bill Creek, a tributary of the Russian River. We have been serving generations of youth, families, and adults since 1946 with our Summer Camps, Guest Group Retreats, and our Environmental Education programs. Our Challenge Course Program was founded in 1990, and has grown leaps and bounds in the past twenty years. We now have 11 high ropes elements and over 25 low ropes elements.

As the Challenge Course Director here at The Woods, I can honestly say that I love my job! I work with incredible people in an amazing natural environment. The real reason I love my job, however, is not for the location or the excitement of working on a Challenge Course-it's because I know I am helping to foster positive change. A Challenge Course is a unique instrument that can be used in many ways. We use the Challenge Course to build meaning and substance within groups, teams, and individuals. For some groups, the Challenge Course is a chance to bond and build community and team cohesiveness. For others, it is a lesson in personal empowerment and making healthy choices. For others, it is a chance to experience what truly makes a leader, or how important trust is within their workplace.

The Challenge Course at Westminster Woods impacts a wide variety of groups-over 8,000 people annually-from eight year old sports teams to septuagenarians and their families. We work with everyone from school groups, church programs, college fraternities and sororities, to corporations and businesses, bachelor parties, families, and groups of friends. Because of our extensive list of clientele, we offer a wide variety of program options to meet diverse needs. At the heart of this program lies our incredibly talented staff of facilitators and naturalists. We provide some of the highest levels of training within the Challenge Course Industry to ensure you have a quality experience here at The Woods.

As always, you are more than welcome to contact me at any time if you have questions or would like to design a program for your group of participants. The following information will help give you an idea of the types of elements we have here at Westminster Woods. I'm looking forward to working with you!

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Veramay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "V".

Craig A. Veramay  
Challenge Course Director  
Westminster Woods Camp & Conference Center  
(707)874-2426 ext. 633  
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# Westminster Woods Challenge Course

## Elements and Programs

For full descriptions, or for more information, feel free to contact Craig A. Veramay,  
Challenge Course Director, at (707)874-2426 or e-mail  
[challengecourse@westminsterwoods.org](mailto:challengecourse@westminsterwoods.org)

### Low Ropes Elements



For many of our programs here at Westminster Woods groups will choose to focus on ground based activities. There are several reasons why our Low Ropes Elements may be more effective when hoping to achieve certain goals than our High Ropes Elements.

Our Low Ropes Course consists of over 25 elements, including a twelve foot tall scaling wall, large cargo nets, bridges, cable traverses, swinging ropes, wobbly balancing platforms, and giant spider webs. The focus of our Low Ropes Elements is to provide an environment for groups to work on skill sets such as teamwork and cooperation, clear communication, trust and perseverance. The activities are presented in a fun and exciting way, and are intentionally designed to push groups out of their comfort zone and help participants explore and better understand how they work together.

Because of this dynamic, our Low Ropes Course is excellent for intact groups, such as groups of co-workers, school classrooms, sports teams, or youth groups. It provides an opportunity to focus heavily upon the group dynamic, and use the activities presented as a metaphor to apply and transfer to everyday life.



We strive to create a safe environment-both physically and emotionally, and our facilitators are trained to help groups and individuals feel a sense of personal empowerment. Rather than telling a group how to accomplish a task or a goal, our facilitators will let groups make mistakes, learn from their decisions, and hopefully learn from the process.

After a Low Ropes element or activity has been completed, groups will typically 'circle up' and have a chance to talk about the element or activity they just completed. This is a valuable time for the group to learn from the experiences they just had.

We can design a program based on an individual element, a half day program, full day programs, or multiple day programs based upon our Low Ropes Elements. For more information, feel free to contact the Challenge Course Office using the information listed above.

## High Ropes Elements



### Inclined Log

The inclined log is a 30 foot timber lashed at an incline between two trees. Starting from 8 feet off the ground, participants must use their determination and balance to walk the length of the log to the top, at 40 feet. This element can be performed alone, or as part of the Giant Swing series.

### Giant Swing

The Swing is a favorite element among the challenge course staff. Three distinct challenges make up the Swing: The Inclined Log, shown above, a 'postman's walk', and the swing itself.

While being held in the air by a belay system, participants climb a ladder, then walk the inclined log. After reaching the top, participants cross the 'Postman's Walk' by stepping down onto a foot-cable and traversing by using a hand-line for balance. Once participants have crossed, they will meet a facilitator stationed at the swing platform who will assist them in securely clipping into our Giant Swing.

Once the facilitators give the command, participants leave the platform, and find themselves swinging on a four story giant swing, soaring through our canyon!



## Zipline

Another favorite element, our 300 foot zipline begins with a walk up our 'zipline trail'. Once at the top of the trail, participants must traverse a postman's walk to reach the Zip Takeoff Platform where they are greeted by a facilitator who will assist them in attaching themselves to the Zip Line. Participants are faced with a daunting task: letting themselves fall from a 40ft. platform, then zipping through our canyon far below...Once participants have reached the bottom, they are assisted by a facilitator in exiting the Zip Line.



## Lions Leap

Our tallest element, the Lions Leap can be challenging in more ways than one. Participants climb nearly 50 feet up a mature Douglas Fir Tree, with the option of climbing the handles in the tree, or climbing the hanging cargo net (see picture to the right).

Once they reach the platform above, the participant can walk, run, or inch their way to the end of 'the plank', where they leap for an adjustable hanging trapeze. Whether they catch it or miss, they are slowly lowered to the ground. A challenging element, not for the faint of heart!

## **Eagle's Perch**

At 25 feet in height the Eagle's Perch may be one of our shorter elements, yet still packs a powerful punch. Participants climb a pole using 'staples' as handholds. Once



at the top, participants must stand upon the top of the pole. Some find this to be extremely difficult, as the platform on top is quite small, and the pole can wobble... Once standing, participants leap out to try and hit one (or both) of the tetherballs suspended in the air before them. Hit or miss, participants are gently lowered to the ground.

## **High V**

The High V is a challenge designed for partners. 30 feet in the air, two cables run from one tree to two separate trees. The goal is for a pair of participants to stand on the opposing cables facing one another, traversing out as far as they can using one another for support.

By supporting one another, it is possible to make it extremely far! A great activity to emphasize the importance of support, trust, teamwork, and giving a helping hand...





## **Giant's Ladder**

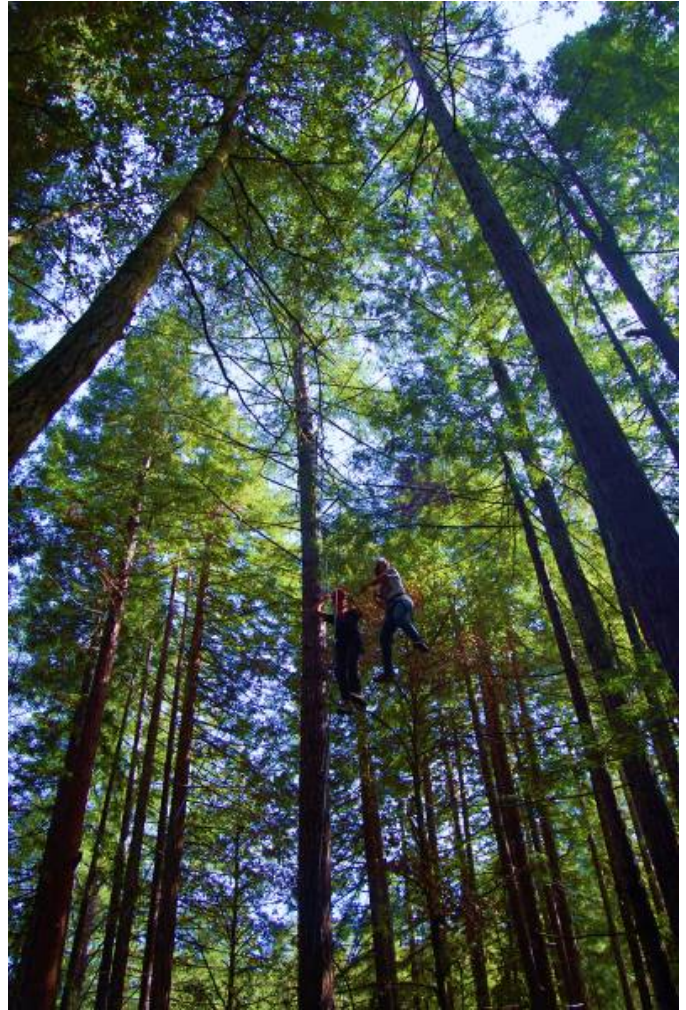
Another paired element, the Giant's Ladder requires a combination of strategy, balance, and strength. Participants first climb up a suspended cargo net to reach the first large rung of a ladder. The second rung rests 5 feet above the first and requires teamwork (or amazing agility) to reach it. Partners must help each other if they hope to succeed in reaching the top of this ladder. Once at the top, participants have a spectacular treetop view, as well as a cowbell to ring, claiming victory over the Giant's Ladder before being lowered gently to the ground by their teammates.



## Multivine

The Multivine is a test in balance and cooperation. In pairs, participants climb up to a foot cable that runs between two trees. The goal is to traverse as far along the cable as possible. Suspended like vines (hence the name) along the length of the cable are several lengths of rope.

Using each other, as well as these ropes, participants traverse through the trees until they have accomplished the goals set out before them.



## Static Course

**The Static Course is a wonderful activity for groups who desire work in responsibility, trust, cooperation, and communication. Paired participants will work together to traverse a series of conjoined elements while taking direct responsibility for their**



**own safety through a self-belay system. Facilitators will lead the group through a course of seven high elements, ranging from 10-35 feet off the ground. As many as 12 people can be off the ground at one time, making this a true 'team' activity.**

I hope these descriptions of the challenges have been helpful. Keep in mind we have several other challenges available, including a climbing wall and a scaling wall, as well as a creek zip line and a 'Pirate's Crossing' traversing our Creek.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (707)87-2426 ext. 633 or email at [challengecourse@westminsterwoods.org](mailto:challengecourse@westminsterwoods.org).

We look forward to meeting you soon!

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.A. Veramay', written in a cursive style.

Craig A. Veramay  
Challenge Course Director