



Photo : Trevor Walker

SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC POLAR BEAR ECO TRIP NOVEMBER 10-16, 2024



Photo : Barbara Kowaliuk



polarbeartrip@saskpolytech.ca



[PolarBearEcoTripwebsite](#)

Welcome to Saskatchewan Polytechnic’s Polar Bear Eco Trip 2024.

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Photo :Leslie Tuchek

OVERVIEW



Photo :Saskatchewan Polytechnic

Discover the wonders of the polar bear capital of the world, Churchill, Manitoba. Led by experienced guides, Leslie Tuchek and Josh Davidson, this journey by van and train takes you to the mouth of the Churchill River on the Hudson Bay.

A Tundra Buggy® excursion provides a full day of viewing and photographing polar bears as they await the formation of ice on the Hudson Bay. The trip also includes exploring the Churchill area looking for bears, visiting interpretive centres, historical and cultural sites and enjoying the scenic wind-blown terrain. At the Churchill Northern Studies Centre, evenings offer social time, guest lectures and there is a good chance the Aurora Borealis will perform for us!

This is an adventure tour with long travel periods and potential delays, so we recommend that you allow 1 day at the end of the trip, in case of weather or other delays. Due to the remoteness of the areas we visit, we recommend that you purchase trip interruption/cancellation insurance and have comprehensive medical insurance. A moderate level of mobility is required.

A Surge micro-credential can be earned through pre-trip learning presentations.

YOUR 2024 TOUR GUIDES

Leslie Tucheck



Leslie received her certificate in ecological education in 2003 and began guiding polar bear/Churchill tours for the University of Saskatchewan. That wonderful opportunity and amazing experience led her to guiding many exciting domestic and international ecological tours. To date she has guided 15 tours to Churchill in both summer and winter.

Churchill holds a special place in her heart, and she loves to share the experience with others.

YOUR 2024 TOUR GUIDES

Josh Davidson



Josh Davidson is the program head for the Recreation and Tourism Management diploma and postgraduate certificate in Hospitality and Tourism Management at Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Previously, Josh dedicated nearly a decade to the adventure tourism industry in southern Spain and the Eastern Canadian Rockies. His expertise lies in scuba diving, white-water rafting, and guiding single-track bike and hike excursions.

In recent years, having returned to Saskatchewan, Josh devotes a significant portion of his leisure time to exploring the northern region of the province with his wife and two children.



Photo: Saskatchewan Polytechnic

OUR TOUR GROUP

As a teaching institute, our goal is to provide learning and experiences to our students and the public. Our tour includes:

- Four Sask Polytech students in related fields of study
- One Sask Polytech department head
- Two experienced guides
- 15 members of the public (based on order of registration)

PRE-TRIP LEARNING



Photo : Saskatchewan Polytechnic

Earn a Surge Micro-credential badge through pre-trip learning:

- **Four pre-trip learning meetings held in September and October.**
- **Attend in person at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, Saskatoon or via Zoom.**
- **Presentations by subject experts on polar bear physiology, the experiences of polar bear researcher Dr. Susan Blum, other wildlife, local and natural history, northern culture, eco-systems, and what to take on your journey.**

TRIP ITINERARY 2024



Photo : Saskatchewan Polytechnic

Day 1 - November 10

Travel to The Pas, MB

Travel from Saskatoon to The Pas in 15-passenger vans with lunch and bio breaks on the way. Join us for supper in a local restaurant and then relax in shared motel rooms as we await the early morning departure of the train.



Photo: Leslie Tuchek

Day 2 - November 11

Train departure and scenic journey

Board the train for a scheduled 2:30 a.m. departure. Settle in and be rocked to sleep by the gentle sway of the train and the faint sound of its whistle (or stay awake and watch for the Aurora Borealis!).

Enjoy leisure activities or take in the scenic beauty. You might spot wildlife such as caribou, foxes and northern birds. Lakes, rivers, muskeg and outcrops of rocks provide captivating views of Canada's boreal forest and Canadian Shield. The train has two washrooms in each car, and food is available for purchase. Fresh air is free during stops at remote communities along the way!



Photo : Leslie Tuchek



Photo : Leslie Tuchek



Photo :Joni Aschim



Photo : Barbara Kowaliuk

Day 3 - November 12

Arrive in Churchill

We arrive in Churchill – The polar capital of the world!

We may see a polar bear on our 24 km drive to our accommodations at the Churchill Northern Studies Centre (CNSC). The CNSC is a LEED-certified building on the historic Churchill rocket research range—a national historic site of Canada.

After check-in and a tasty lunch, we will have an afternoon of area exploration. Keep your eyes peeled for polar bears!



Photo : Leslie Tuchek



Photo : Leslie Tuchek



Photo : Kamen Korejbo



Photo : Kamen Korejbo

Day 4 - November 13

Tundra Buggy® day

Embark on an unforgettable adventure on a Tundra Buggy®. The rugged yet comfortable safe viewing vehicle will give you a “tundra buggy massage” as it ambles along the shoreline military roads. These specialized vehicles have a viewing deck on the back and the windows open for excellent photographic opportunities. Rest easy with a self-contained washroom onboard, ensuring comfort and convenience throughout this exciting expedition. You could be gazing over the frozen landscape at bears, Arctic or red fox, Arctic hares, or ptarmigan as you enjoy a delicious lunch, a coffee/hot chocolate break or a snack.



Photo : Nicholas Kowaliuk



Photo : Leslie Tuchek

Day 5 - November 14

Churchill exploration day

Our last day in Churchill is an exciting day of van exploration, ensuring we see the highlights of Churchill, and have some free time for souvenir shopping.

We will board the train at 7:30 p.m. but first gather for a farewell supper in a local fine-dining restaurant serving specialties such as Arctic char.



Photo : Nicholas Kowaliuk



Photo : Leslie Tuchek

Day 6 - November 15

Train journey to The Pas

You and the last hours of your train journey are winding down. Viewing photos, reminiscing about trip experiences, visiting with new friends, watching the ever-changing landscape and catching up on your sleep may be on your personal itinerary. The train is scheduled to arrive in The Pas at 11:30 p.m. , where double rooms await you at the Wescana Inn.

Day 7 - November 16

Travel The Pas to Saskatoon

The staff at Wescana Inn's restaurant will be waiting to serve you a delicious breakfast. Our departure for Saskatoon will be 8:30 a.m. . With lunch and bio-breaks included, we plan to have you back in Saskatoon by 5:00 p.m. .

POLAR BEAR ECO TRIP TUITION 2024

Tuition	CAN\$3,597.70
Student fee	CAN\$1.40
GST	CAN\$179.95
PST	CAN\$215.95
Total	CAN\$3,995.00

Included with tuition

- Travel by shared vans from Saskatoon to The Pas and return
- Economy class seats on VIA Rail from The Pas to Churchill and return
- Shared accommodations at the Churchill Northern Studies Centre (two nights)
- Shared accommodations at the Wescana Inn, The Pas (two nights)
- Lunches on van travel days (days one and seven)
- Meals in Churchill
- Pre-trip learning sessions with a Surge micro-credential badge for attending (includes shared knowledge and experiences of guides/interpreters, researchers and guest speakers)

NOT included with tuition

- Pre-trip or post-trip travel to or from Saskatoon
- Breakfast and supper on group van travel days (days one and seven)
- Meals/food on the train
- Any meals or additional accommodation required due to delays

HOW TO REGISTER

Registration forms will be accepted beginning *Friday March 8, 2024*

Step 1: Visit the trip website to access the registration form.

Step 2: Review the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Refund Policy for Domestic Educational Tours.

Step 3: Complete and submit the registration form. Fifteen spots are available to members of the public. Acceptance is based in the order registration forms are received. A wait list will be maintained to replace any cancellations.

Step 4: Await contact from the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Continuing Education Team starting on *Wednesday May 1, 2024*. They will collect payment at this time and finalize your registration. Ensure that your payment method is ready to guarantee your spot.

2025 NOTIFICATION LIST

If you would like to be sent details of the 2025 trip once they are available, enter your contact information on our [notification form](#) .

SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC REFUND POLICY FOR DOMESTIC EDUCATIONAL TOURS

A student who withdraws three months prior to the tour start (up to August 9, 2024) will be subject to a non-refundable \$350.00 administration fee.

No refunds for withdrawals after three months prior to the tour start date (after August 9, 2024).

Travel cancellation or interruption insurance is highly recommended to protect your investment.

This trip has been carefully planned by experienced guides to put you in the best places at the optimum time to see bears. However, nature, wildlife and weather are unpredictable so no guarantees can be offered.

The itinerary and planned activities of this tour may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is not responsible for expenses incurred due to weather or travel delays.



Photo : Leslie Tuchek

QUOTES FROM PREVIOUS PARTICIPANTS

When asked “What would you say to someone considering this trip?”

“Trip is absolutely amazing. Nothing like travelling with a like minded group of people. Having a week together formed a very cohesive group, much nicer than boarding a plane in the morning and flying out again in the evening. Lasting connections were made.”

“Just do it.”

“The trip is not just about seeing the polar bears. It’s about the entire journey and if you are looking for a five-star luxury holiday this is not the trip for you, but if you are looking for a five star ‘experience’, then this adventure will not disappoint.”

“Go! Its fantastic! I imagine that the design of this eco-trip makes it hard to compare with other tours out there. It felt special - the students, the learning, the personal connections and knowledge, the long train ride...who would want to just fly in and out?? ;)”

“Do it, but I don't know if you'll be as lucky as I was. Then again, maybe your trip will be even better. Order the Arctic char.”

“I would highly recommend going, this trip was an amazing experience, and I would recommend it to everyone!”

“Do your homework and educate yourself about what to expect. An adventure, not a vacation.”

“Soon after setting off our group started to ‘mingle’. As we progressed on the journey everyone came together and I felt as though I'd found long lost family members. It was a lot of fun and I won't soon forget.”



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Questions?

Contact: polarbeartrip@saskpolytech.ca



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We extend our heartfelt thanks to those who captured the magic of our previous polar bear trips through their lenses. Your breathtaking photographs have immortalized unforgettable memories and have become the soul of this brochure. With your permission, we can share the power and beauty of our experiences with others. Thank you for your valuable contributions.