



Alaska Wildland Adventures

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Kirk Hoessle
President, Alaska Wildland Adventures

Kirk Hoessle (pronounced “hessel”) is the President of Alaska Wildland Adventures, Inc. He led the company’s first trip for five years before growing into a management position. He has been the principal shareholder and leader of Alaska Wildland Adventures since 1987.

Kirk is currently a member of the Board of Directors for the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), Alaska’s 1,000 member travel trade association. From 2012 through 2016, he was one of 32 travel industry leaders appointed to the US Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, advising the US government on issues and policy related to travel and tourism. In October 2015, Kirk was awarded the 2015 Stan Stephens Stewardship Award by ATIA. This award commemorates the passion and dedication that Stan Stephens lived by in his commitment to safeguard Prince William Sound after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and it honors Kirk’s work in protecting wild Alaska and sharing its beauty in a responsible and sustainable way. He also serves as Advisor to the Board of the Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association (AWRTA), an organization for which he served as a founding Board Member as well as President for two terms. AWRTA is the voice for ecotourism in Alaska and has been very influential in guiding statewide tourism policy.

Born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, Kirk came to Alaska for a summer job as a crew leader with the Bureau of Land Management’s Youth Conservation Corps program in 1976. He has traveled and guided adventure travel trips throughout Alaska. His fondest travel memories involve backpacking and rafting in Alaska’s Brooks Range prior to the establishment of the National Parks now encompassing much of the area.

Kirk holds a degree in Environmental Education and Outdoor Recreation from George Williams College of Aurora University of Aurora, Illinois. Before embarking upon a career in Alaska adventure travel, his focus was environmental education. In his seven years in this field, he served as an instructor, outdoor school director, curriculum writer and program designer. And then, the spell of the Alaska wilderness got the best of him.

Kirk is deeply connected to his company and balances work with family time, boating, natural history interpretation, cross country and telemark skiing, wilderness exploration, competitive volleyball and world travel.

Personal Awards:

Stan Stephens Stewardship Award, Alaska Travel Industry Association, 2015
Special Achievement Award, Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council, 2003
Denali Award, Alaska Travel Industry Association, 2000
Ginny Hill Wood Award, Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association, 2001
Distinguished Service Award, Alaska Recreation and Park Association, 1996

Company Awards:

2010 Responsible Tourism Showcase Honoree, Educational Travel Conference
2007 Top Small Workplaces award, Winning Workplaces and the Wall Street Journal
2007 Outstanding Business in Tourism Award, Kenai Peninsula Borough
2005 International Green List Award Top Tour Operator, Condé Nast Traveler
2001 Arctic Award for Linking Tourism and Conservation, World Wildlife Fund
2000 Business Most Committed to Success of Tourism on the Kenai Peninsula Award,
Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council
1998 and 1995 Peninsula Pride Award, Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council
1997 Outstanding Long Term Program Award, Alaska Land Managers Forum
For additional information about awards for Alaska Wildland Adventures, please see
“Honors We Have Received” insert also available in this packet.

Speaker and Panelist:

Statewide, national and international tourism; ecotourism; environmental education; and natural history interpretation conferences and symposia.

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