



What to Know: Your Course at Commonweal Garden

Commonweal Garden

Commonweal Garden is the home of the Regenerative Design Institute. The following information about Commonweal Garden is for course participants. Please read this carefully. If you have any questions, feel free contact the RDI office.

Getting to Commonweal Garden

Commonweal Garden is located at 480 Mesa Road, Bolinas, California.

Our website (<http://www.regenerativedesign.org/commonwealmap>) has a map and driving directions.

The Site

Commonweal Garden is a 17-acre farm located in Bolinas, on the beautiful and rugged California Coast. Nestled into its own quiet valley, the site features registered organic gardens, orchards, production green house, ponds, seasonal stream, springs, goats and chickens, a yurt classroom, multiple grey water systems, and several natural building features.

Weather

Northern California coastal weather can be unpredictable—and we definitely get coastal weather patterns at the site, so be prepared. While planning for your time at Commonweal Garden, please keep in mind that nights can be cold and the days warm. We recommend bringing layered clothing for varying weather and different levels of physical activity throughout the day.

Pets

Commonweal Garden is a pet-free environment. Help us respect the diversity of wildlife and habitat at Commonweal Garden by refraining from bringing your pets onto the property—including leaving them in your car.

Residential Program Information

Camping and Accommodations

You will be camping during your stay at Commonweal Garden. Please be sure to bring the proper gear—a tent, a warm sleeping bag, sleeping mattress, a tarp to keep moisture from getting to your tent from the ground, and any other desired gear. See suggested What You Should Know list, below.

Amenities

The site has composting toilets and solar showers. There are several sink stations for washing



Regenerative Design Institute

Cultivating life skills and deepening awareness of our place on earth

hands and brushing teeth. All of the sink stations have potable water. Please do not drink from the garden faucets or non-potable water faucets.

There is wireless internet access in the yurt, as well as, electrical outlets for charging cell phones and laptops. Cell phone reception is spotty, but usually accessible by taking a short walk down the road. There is not a public computer available.

Meals

There will be vegan and vegetarian options served at all meals. Meat will be served occasionally. We do our best to serve only organic vegetables, and meat and dairy for those who eat them will be free-range and hormone free and also organic if possible. You will be divided into groups to share in kitchen set-up and clean-up duties for meals.

We do not provide for gluten intolerant, raw food, or severe food allergy diets. While there are often options available at each meal to accommodate such special diets we request that those with dietary restrictions please provide for their food needs.

Coffee and Tea

There will be tea, coffee and snacks set-up adjacent to the eating area—and available throughout the day. Please clean up after yourself.

Commonweal Garden and Surrounding Parklands

The core area of the Commonweal Garden is surrounded by a deer fence. This core area includes most of our course activities and the garden where our food is grown. Though things growing in the garden may look tempting, we ask that you please refrain from picking anything. The camping area is outside the fence line—please be sure that the deer fence gate to the camping area is closed and latched at all times.

Commonweal Garden is surrounded by parklands. There are several nice hiking trails accessible from the site. The Palomarin trailhead is a few miles down the road with a wonderful hike to Bass Lake and beyond. We are a short hike from a beautiful beach and there is beach access in the town of Bolinas. So, if the ocean calls you, bring your favorite northern California beach gear—bathing suit, wetsuits, boogie/surf boards, etc.

When hiking outside of the core area, watch for poison oak—there is a lot of it around. If you're not sure what it looks like, ask a staff person or fellow course participant. Be aware of ticks in spring, summer, and fall (May through July is peak tick season).

General Information

Water

Commonweal Garden is on a spring fed water system. With careful management there is plenty



Regenerative Design Institute

Cultivating life skills and deepening awareness of our place on earth

for our needs—people, animals and the garden. Please be mindful of water usage while on-site, especially during the dry season.

Parking

Guests are welcome to park in the designated parking area. Please follow the indicated parking rows so as not to block cars from exiting. It is possible to camp in your vehicle (camper van, small trailer, etc) in the parking area. Please let the office know upon registration.

Private Areas

Commonweal Garden is also the home of numerous RDI staff. Please be respectful. Besides the kitchen/eating area, the area to the east of Wish Creek is private. This includes James and Penny's house and the lands surrounding it. The public area is west of Wish Creek and includes the yurt, greenhouse, garden, solar showers and path to camping area. Please note that our garden staff housing is to the left of the showers at the top of the garden. Be conscious of noise level after 10pm around staff housing.

Shoes Off

The yurt classroom is a shoe-free zone. Please remove shoes before entering.

Telephone Use

There is a phone in the yurt that can be used to make outgoing calls outside of class time. Should someone need to contact you during the course they can leave a message at the office (415-868-9681). Please note that no one is in the office on the weekends.

Quiet Hours

Quiet time is between 10pm and 6am. Please be considerate of your course-mates and RDI staff. After 10:00 pm, keep voices quiet and, please, no drumming. Acoustic music is OK around the campfire and in the yurt after 10pm.

Library

The RDI library is in the yurt. This is a private collection that we are happy to share with you while you are on-site. You are welcome to read these books in the yurt. Please do not remove books from the yurt, and it would be greatly appreciated if you would replace them on the shelf where you found them.

Emergencies

If there is a fire or if you need help, ring the bell hanging at the yurt entrance or the dinner bell at the entrance to the bunkhouse/kitchen. If necessary, use the phone in the yurt to call 911.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the property except near the sand pile along the driveway outside the front gate. Please put your extinguished butts in the trash. We are very serious about this due to fire danger.



Regenerative Design Institute

Cultivating life skills and deepening awareness of our place on earth

Look After Everyone Else

If you are looking after everyone else, then everyone else is looking after you. Please, if you see something that needs to be done—do it. Return wayward cups and dishes to the kitchen area, if the coffee/tea area is a mess give it a little love, let staff know if a toilet needs toilet paper, etc.

Transportation Options

Commonweal Garden is located at 480 Mesa Road, Bolinas, California.

Our website (<http://www.regenerativedesign.org/commonwealmap>) has a map and driving directions.

Carpooling

We encourage course participants to carpool. Please let us know on your registration if you DO NOT want to be included on the carpool list. If you do not indicate your preference you will be included. Once the carpool list is sent, it is up to course participants to self-organize rideshares.

Airports

San Francisco International Airport (SFO)

Oakland International Airport (OAK)

A West Marin Taxi

awestmarintaxi@gmail.com

Tel: 415-868-1330, Cell: 415-497-6656

Cost is \$80 each way to/from SFO and to/from OAK

Cost is \$40 each way to/from Manzanita Park and Ride, Mill Valley

Public transportation to/from SFO

Take the Marin Airporter to the Manzanita Park and Ride in Mill Valley

- From Manzanita Park & Ride, take the West Marin Stagecoach to Bolinas or arrange a taxi with A West Marin Taxi (see above).
- The West Marin Stage Coach will let you out in the town of Bolinas. Commonweal Garden is a few miles outside of town.
- Please arrange with the carpool list or RDI office to arrange a pick-up.

Marin Airporter

415-461-4222

<http://www.marinairporter.com/>

West Marin Stagecoach

415-526-3239

<http://www.marintransit.org/stage.html>

Public Transportation from OAK

We have not figured an easy way to get from the Oakland Airport to Commonweal Garden.

Check with the carpool list to see if someone in the course is willing to offer a ride or take the West Marin Taxi.



What You Should Bring

Please help to make a minimal impact on the land—plan to pack-out what you pack-in.

For Camping

Tent

Warm sleeping bag

Sleeping pad

Tarp

Flashlight and spare batteries

Alarm clock

Biodegradable personal items (soap, shampoo)

Towel

Mosquito repellent

Technu—poison oak soap

Dish, bowl, cup and utensils

Cloth napkin

Thermos for hot drinks

Water bottle for carrying with you

Layered clothing for varying weather

- Warm sweater
- Long pants
- Clothes for cold nights, cozy warm clothes for campfires
- Warm windbreaker type coat
- Raincoat and other rain gear

Sturdy shoes/boots; rugged sandals are fine if you have boots as well

Slip-on shoes are convenient for entering and exiting the yurt classroom

A hat to protect from sun and cold

Sunglasses and sunscreen

Gloves for warmth

Work gloves (for workshops with hands-on activities)

Snacks or special foods

For Permaculture Courses

Architects' or engineers' scale

Straight-edge

Compass, directional

Compass, drafting

25' measuring tape

Pens and notepad

A tape recorder if you want to record the lessons



Regenerative Design Institute

Cultivating life skills and deepening awareness of our place on earth

Camera

Optional items to bring include:

Pruners

Field guides or other resources

Binoculars, pocket magnifying glass

Art supplies

A comfortable chair for the classroom

Musical instruments, favorite songs for evening revelry

Passion show props or costumes