

# Her Odyssey

Two Women Travel the Length of the Americas by non-motorized Means

## Dates:

**Total Journey:** began November 23, 2015 and is expected to take 5 years.

South America: November 2015-November 2018

Central America: Begins February 2019

## Overview:

The two-woman hiking team, supported by a Board of friends and a community of thousands across the globe, are traveling the length of the Americas by non-motorized means, connecting the story of the land and its inhabitants. Along the way they engage local populations in storytelling.

Focusing on the stories of empowered women and enlightened men, Her Odyssey emphasize the progress in the uphill battle toward equal rights, particularly throughout machista cultures in Latin America. **The 'Herstory' Series** on their website highlight women creating change. The expedition challenges social norms and prejudices about women in the backcountry and tests the determination of the adventurers.

## Traveling Team: Bethany Hughes & Lauren Reed

**Bethany Hughes** grew up learning to climb in the mountain ranges of South America. She later guided Boy Scout backpacking groups in New Mexico, then worked with sled dog teams in Tongass National Forest along Alaska's Inside Passage. Since thru-hiking the Pacific Crest Trail she has focused on long distance excursions and encouraging others to get outside as a means to personal and social empowerment.

### Trails Hiked:

- 2010 Pacific Crest Trail
- 2012 Colorado Trail
- 2014 Tamang Heritage Trail, Nepal
- 2008 West Highland Way, Scotland
- 2007 Pembrokeshire Coast Path, Wales

**Lauren Reed** discovered her joy of the outdoors at a young age, exploring the neighborhood and nearby woodlands with siblings and friends. While attending Penn State University she spent many weekends leading climbing, canoeing, and hiking trips. Post graduation, Lauren thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail. She has since thru-hiked three other long-distance trails (listed below) and spent innumerable nights outdoors both for pleasure and work as a wilderness therapy guide. Having hiked over 12,000 miles, she has earned the 'Triple Crown' of the hiking world. In her time away from longer trails, she continues finding enrichment outdoors, learning, writing, sharing, photographing, and exploring along the way.

### Trails Hiked:

- 2008 Appalachian Trail
- 2010 Pacific Crest Trail
- 2013 Continental Divide Trail
- 2012 Colorado Trail

## **The Goal:**

We see a growing movement of women across the globe standing up and stepping forward. From workplace to personal life; in agriculture, art, sciences, adventure sports, the list goes on. It is our belief that by each pursuing her dream and passion, we forge a more equal playing field. Our chosen field is long-distance hiking. The parameters are to travel the length of the Americas, gaining northward degrees of latitude by non-motorized means. This allows for lateral movement when necessary.

Hiking and paddling the length of South America took 3 hiking seasons. The Her Odyssey team became the first people to thru-hike the Greater Patagonia Trail which they connected to the Inca road system, the Qhapaq Ñan, to cross the northern expanses of the continent.

**South America took 730 days of travel, 8,024 miles, across 6 countries, and 20 pairs of shoes.**

The team will paddle Central America via the Caribbean in Trak kayaks and then bike Mexico to enable broader and safer exploration. Bethany will pick up on the Continental Divide Trail which traces the Rocky Mountains through the United States while Lauren cycles the country, rejoining routes for the Great Divide Trail of Canada. The ultimate objective is the Arctic Ocean.

**The team share the journey via weekly stories posted to their [website](http://www.Her-Odyssey.org) ([www.Her-Odyssey.org](http://www.Her-Odyssey.org)), about people, culture, land, and the journey.**

They also maintain a variety of social media platforms

**[Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/_herodyssey_/) ([https://www.instagram.com/\\_herodyssey\\_/](https://www.instagram.com/_herodyssey_/))**

**[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/herodyssey/) (<https://www.facebook.com/herodyssey/>)**

**[Twitter](https://twitter.com/Her_Odyssey) ([https://twitter.com/Her\\_Odyssey](https://twitter.com/Her_Odyssey))**

**The project runs on their personal savings and support from Fundraising.**

**Supporters can join the journey on [Patreon](https://www.patreon.com/HerOdyssey)**

**(<https://www.patreon.com/HerOdyssey>)**

**Or make 1 time gifts via PayPal**

## **Sponsors:**

Hyperlite Mountain Gear

Granite Gear

Astral Footwear

Trak Kayaks

Xero Shoes

Farm to Feet

## **Quotes:**

“As a little girl growing up in South America, there was a disparity between how my parents told me I should expect to be treated as a woman and how I saw the women around me being treated. This walk is about reconciling that disconnect, for all of us. Especially our daughters.”

“Her Odyssey is as much about the people we meet as the land we cover.” -Bethany

“Walking connects a person at all levels; with yourself, the earth, and others. It is a natural and healthy way to foster understanding and communication.” Bethany

“I’m doing this because I believe in it. Empowering others is bigger than myself. It’s bigger than both of us and everyone else involved. This trek is about so much more than travelling across the Americas.” Lauren

“I was drawn to Bethany’s original idea of this trek for many reasons, the biggest one being I enjoy challenging myself- I’ve worked with troubled youth in the wilds of Utah, I’ve hiked across the US 3 times, what would be next? Walking across continents, of course! I can’t remember the last time I was challenged so intensely, it’s been an amazing opportunity for self-growth.” Lauren

“One of the best compliments I’ve ever received was, ‘Man, was I wrong!’ It was referring to a (now) friend miscalculating my abilities. I like to keep that in the back of my head when others try to tell me I can’t do something.” Lauren

“I enjoy the ability to keep things simple- thru-hiking forces you to simplify both your life and your thoughts. I also enjoy how straight forward and unforgiving it can be- as I often say, ‘Mother nature does not have an ‘easy’ button, though she does treat everyone equally’. I can respect that.” Lauren

## [Photo Gallery](#)