

Week 7 (July 24-30) Report

Prepared by Ms. Hannah Bonner

This was the final week of this year's IRES program. Students finished up landslide research in Badong and then spent the remainder of their time immersed in the sites of Beijing.

Day 1 (Monday, July 24)

Monday was the students' last full day in Badong.

Four students, along with Dr. Wang and two of his children, woke up early for a boat tour of Shennong Stream. Shennong Stream is a tributary of the Yangtze River and is famed for its spectacular geologic and archeologic sites. The group enjoyed beautiful scenery, cultural performances, and a new perspective on the area's landscape.



Figure 1. Shennong Stream is known for its sheer limestone cliffs, clear water, and hanging coffin archeologic sites.



Figure 2. Participants on the Shennong Stream boat trip: (from left to right) Hannah Bonner, Julie Monluc, James Wang, Anna Wang, Erica Lucas, and Lynn Nguyen.

That afternoon, Dr. Wang took students to visit new Badong. New Badong is an area east of the Yangtze River where former residents of the Huangtupo landslide site were relocated. The class discussed the effects of landslides on the livelihood of people living in the region.



Figure 3. Students overlooking apartment complexes in new Badong.

Students spent the remainder of the evening shopping and packing in preparation for the next day's departure to Beijing.

Day 2 (Tuesday, July 25)

The group departed Badong early Tuesday morning from the China University of Geosciences dorms. The entire morning and early afternoon was spent riding the bus back to Wuhan. Travel was delayed by an accident on the road. A semi-truck hauling logs had caught on fire!



Figure 4. A roadside accident stopped traffic along the bus route back to Wuhan. As a result of the accident, the lumber cargo of the semi-truck pictured caught on fire.



Figure 5. Students entertained themselves on the long bus ride by playing cards in the aisle. Pictured (left to right): Julie Monluc, Hannah Bonner, Anna Wang, and Erica Lucas.

Once safely in Wuhan, the group grabbed a late lunch at the train station. Everyone then gathered to board the train. It was a nearly five-hour ride to reach Beijing. Students used the time to catch up on journaling, sleep, and make plans for the rest of the week.

The group arrived in Beijing late Tuesday night. Another bus was waiting at the station to drop everyone off at their lodging. IRES students said goodbye to the students from Beijing University of Technology and Dr. Bao. For the rest of their time in China, the IRES students stayed in the BJUT's international student dorms.



Figure 6. Riding the train back to Beijing. Pictured (from left to right): Colton Morrow, Erica Lucas, and Keyin Scott.

Days 3-6 (Wednesday through Saturday, July 26-29)

Students were given Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday to explore Beijing as they pleased. The students broke into small groups to visit shopping districts, cultural attractions, and historic sites around the city.

Visits of note include trips to Tiananmen Square, Beihai Park, Dongyue Temple, Peking University, the Olympic Badminton Gymnasium, and the Great Wall. Students also enjoyed the opportunity to purchase Chinese souvenirs at local hutongs, Hongqiao Pearl Market, and Panjiayuan Antique Market. The group enjoyed excellent meals at both the university cantina and their favorite Beijing restaurants and food stands.



Figure 7. Led by their Chinese friend Li, students experience the Great Wall at Badaling. Pictured (from left to right): Keyin Scott, Eleanor Dietz, and Lynn Nguyen.



Figure 8. Students take a nighttime walk around Tiananmen Square.



Figure 9. Students browse stores and pick out souvenirs at the Nanluoguxiang Hutong.



Figure 10. Students experience unique aspects of Beijing as they play badminton on the Beijing University of Technology's Olympic court and admire statues at the Dongyue Temple.



Figure 11. Some of the students favorite Beijing foods: fresh noodles from the university cantina and creamy mango drinks from roadside stores.



Figure 12. Students' last dinner together at the cantina. Pictured (from left to right): Hannah Bonner, Erica Lucas, Julie Monluc, Mrs. Wang, Anna Wang, and Lynn Ngyuen.

Day 7 (Sunday, July 30)

Sunday was the final day in China for this year's IRES students. They woke up early to travel by taxi to the airport. Despite long lines, everyone successfully arrived at home.

While it's been nice to return to the comfort and familiarity of America, each student left China with a newfound appreciation of the country's people, language, culture, and geology.