

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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News Release

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NM State Parks Support Transportation Grants for Outdoor Classrooms

Santa Fe, NM - State Parks invites schools and teachers to apply for a grant to help pay for the bus or other mode of transportation to take school children to State Parks during the 2016-17 school year. **The deadline to apply is October 21, 2016.**

Teachers are encouraged to apply soon and are invited to bring students to any of the 35 NM State Parks. Detailed information and application can be found at www.nmparks.com under the **Activities/Outdoor Education heading.**

“State Parks strongly supports meaningful, hands-on outdoor classroom experiences,” said State Park Director Christy Tafoya. “These grants provide opportunities for children to learn about stewardship of the beautiful resources in our State Parks in a fun and interactive way.”

The State Parks Division has formed lasting partnerships with schools and teachers. Previous grant recipients are encouraged to apply again, and State Parks is also seeking first-time applicants who are willing to commit to participate in the Outdoor Classroom Program.

Since 2007, State Parks Outdoor Classroom Program has provided wonderful outdoor learning experiences to more than 166,000 students statewide. With 35 outdoor classrooms across the state, and many cultural and natural resources, State Parks provide a safe, friendly environment for outdoor learning that ties to classroom study.

Teachers rated the program last year with a 9.5 rating for their overall experience and 9.5 for meeting goals and objectives. One teacher who visited Rio Grande Nature Center State Park in Albuquerque wrote, “I love being able to focus our learning on a theme (ponds and Bosque) and then going to the Bosque! Our goals were all met. Most of the students were more engaged in learning and now are ready to learn about other environments.” Many teachers commented that these field trips support science, math and reading and that there is no substitute for children connecting to nature in parks.

Outdoor Classroom Program trips must be to a New Mexico State Park and a list of parks is available at www.nmparks.com. The applicant must be a teacher or representative of a public or public-charter school within a New Mexico school district. The strongest applications are those that most clearly link classroom study with the proposed field trip. Teachers may plan one or more field trips, but cost will be a selection consideration.



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Conditions are Right for Adventure at Your New Mexico State Parks!

The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

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