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Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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New Mexico State Parks Division Offers Eighth Year of Transportation Grants for Outdoor Classrooms

SANTA FE, NM – The New Mexico State Parks Division invites schools and teachers to apply for transportation grants to take school children to State Parks during the 2015-2016 school year. This is the eighth year of the *Kids 'n Parks Transportation Grants*, a component of the highly successful New Mexico Outdoor Classroom Program. **Applications are due by October 16th.**

“Students and teachers have given State Parks an “A” grade for the Outdoor Classroom Program,” said State Parks Director Christy Tafoya. “It is a great way for the kids of New Mexico to have meaningful, hands-on learning experiences in a State Park.”

Kids 'n Parks gives teachers the opportunity to take their students on field trips to a New Mexico State Park, where hands-on, minds-on experiences introduce and reinforce the standards and benchmarks being taught in the classroom. State Parks pays the transportation costs of such field trips, fully or in part.

State Parks has formed lasting partnerships with schools and teachers, and the programs provided at parks reinforce classroom learning. Previous grant recipients are encouraged to apply again, as well as teachers at other grade levels from those same schools. State Parks is also seeking first-time applicants who are willing to make a commitment to participate in the Outdoor Classroom Program. The application is available online at www.nmparks.com.

Outdoor Classroom Program trips must be to a New Mexico State Park; 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 field trip must correlate to classroom study, meet one or more performance standards and be completed by the end of the school year.

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. “The Outdoor Classroom Program has reached more than 165,000 students since its inception,” said Christy Tafoya, Director for State Parks. “Teachers tell us that the Outdoor Classroom Program helps them to meet their goals and objectives for student academic achievement.”

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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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