

Rio Grande Nature Center State Park-Group Registration Form

All groups must register in advance. To do so, complete this registration form and submit it via fax (344-4505), email (tanja.george@state.nm.us or heather.maccurdy@state.nm.us), regular mail or in person. Groups are scheduled in the order that their registrations are received. The park cannot accommodate more than 60 students at one time. Please plan your visit accordingly. You must complete a separate group registration form for each date that your group is planning to visit. Please note that our ability to provide guided programs is based on the availability of our Volunteer Naturalists. Guided programs are not available on Mondays and require four weeks advance notice. The park use fee is NOT a parking fee and applies to all groups visiting the park whether self guided or guided, even if the bus does not park in the lot.

Please initial here to acknowledge your understanding of park safety and fees outlined below.

Date and Time you would like to visit

Best Date: _____ 2nd Best Date: _____ Arrival Time: _____ Departure Time: _____

Your Contact Information

Organization (name of school or group): _____

Organization mailing address: _____

Organization phone number: _____ Organization fax number: _____

Contact Person (first and last name): _____

Contact's email address: _____

Contact's best phone #: _____ Alternate phone #: _____

Will the contact person be attending the requested program? Yes No

Have any of the teachers/leaders attended the Bosque Education Guide workshop? Yes No

Names and emails of other teachers or group leaders:

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Group Information

Grade levels of children: _____ Number of children: _____ Number of adults/chaperones: _____

*The required ratio of adults to children is 1:7 for 1st-12th grade and 1:5 for Kindergarten or younger

Is there anything we should know about your group? (Special topics of study; individuals with special needs; etc.)

Please select one of the following:

- Self-guided:** Teacher/group leader plans a safe and educational visit to explore the areas regularly open to the public. Please see website and information below for ideas. Chaperone to child ratio applies to all groups.
- Guided:** Volunteer Naturalists conduct program(s) for your group at the Park. Each program is 1-1.5 hours. Please select a maximum of two programs.

Options for guided programs

____ **Pond**– Outdoor program: guides teach participants how to catch, observe, and release aquatic invertebrates (availability depends on weather and season)

____ **Bosque Walk**– Outdoor program: guides teach participants about the bosque ecosystem while observing and identifying local flora and fauna (walk is about 1 mile of generally flat terrain)

____ **Bird Walk**– Outdoor program: guides teach participants how to use binoculars and practice basic bird identification

____ **Trunks**– indoor program: guides present a program on one of the following topics (please circle one)

Arthropods

Mammals

Birds

Rock Cycle

Cottonwood Habitat

Amphibians and Reptiles

Bats

Lunch at the Park

There is one group shelter that seats approximately 70 students and chaperons in front of the education building. The shelter is available on a first come, first served basis. In order to help protect wildlife, the shelter is the only location in the park to eat lunch or snacks. Thank you for cleaning up. There are trash bins at the shelter and recycling bins in the Visitor Center. Outdoor cooking is not permitted and there are no concessions available.

Will your group be eating lunch at the park? No Yes If yes, approximately what time? _____

Activity at Your Location

- Educational Outreach Trunk**– Volunteer Naturalist presents a one hour program for 10-25 participants at your location (please circle one)

Arthropods

Mammals

Birds

Rock Cycle

Cottonwood Habitat

Amphibians and Reptiles

Bats

- Informational Booth**– Volunteer Naturalists and/or Ranger sets up a table with hands-on exhibits and information about the bosque and NM State Parks

Event type/theme: _____

Expected attendance: Kids: _____ Adults: _____ Indoor or outdoor location? _____

Classroom number or other location information, driving directions, parking, checking in procedures, etc:

Fees

The Park Day-Use Fee is an entrance fee, NOT a parking fee and it **applies to all groups** visiting the park whether self guided or guided even if the bus doesn't park in the lot. The Rio Grande Nature Center State Park is an enterprise agency and most of its operating budget is earned through entrance fees. Fees are as follows:

- Bus/van (8+ seats) = **\$15 cash (exact) or check**. Note: We cannot accept credit card payments. Group leaders should get a receipt from a Park Ranger (the one who meets your bus or at the Visitors Center).
- Private Vehicle (chaperones driving separately) = **\$3 cash (exact) or check**. Chaperones may pay at the self-pay station in the parking lot. If they display a current NM State Parks annual permit or a Friends of the Rio Grande Nature Center permit on the dash there is no additional fee.

Your Safety and Comfort at the Park

- **Carry a trail map and cell phone. Know where you are in case you need to report an emergency and how to get out of the bosque in case of an emergency!**
- We encourage students to record their observations by writing, drawing, and photography. Please **do not collect** plants, animals, or other natural objects.
- Smoking is prohibited at the Rio Grande Nature Center State Park AND in the bosque.
- Be prepared for outdoor activity by wearing weather appropriate clothing, a hat and comfortable walking shoes. Bring plenty of water, sunscreen, and insect repellent as needed.
- The chaperone to student ratio is 1:7 for 1st-12th grade and 1:5 for kindergarten or younger. Discipline is the responsibility of the teachers and chaperones, not park staff or volunteers.
- Eating is permitted only at the group shelter. Cooking is not permitted and the shelter cannot be reserved. Food and beverages are not available at the park, please bring what you will need.
- The Rio Grande Nature Center State Park is a wildlife refuge. Please do not climb trees or harass wildlife. Stay on designated trails at all times to help protect wildlife habitat.
- Please remind the bus drivers and chaperones driving separately to observe the 25 mph speed limit on Candelaria Road in our neighborhood and the 5 mph speed limit in the parking lot.

Resources to Use Before, During, and After Your Visit

For a map of the Park, please visit: <http://www.nmrd.state.nm.us/SPD/documents/RGNCparkmapfinal2.pdf>

The Bosque Education Guide (a K-12 interdisciplinary curriculum about the Middle Rio Grande Bosque Ecosystem) is available, in part, at the following website <http://www.nmnaturalhistory.org/educational-resources/sections/bosque-education-guide> There you will find both classroom and field activities which you may find useful. Some materials are available in Spanish as well as in English. For a self-guided visit, look for Chapter 3: *Going Out – Field Activities*: check out Bosque Search Bingo (K-8th) and Reading the Bosque (4th – 12th) activities.

The Friends of the Rio Grande Nature Center (FRGNC) is a non-profit organization devoted to the support of the Rio Grande Nature Center State Park. Visit the FRGNC website to read articles about the natural history of the area as well as to learn more about events, membership and volunteering: www.rgnc.org

A Field Guide to the Plants and Animals of the Middle Rio Grande Bosque is an excellent field guide to area flora and fauna. You may wish to borrow or purchase a copy to use with your students before, during or after the trip.

<http://www.unmpress.com/books.php?ID=11539430601088&Page=book>

Self Guided Time at the Park

To enjoy your time at the Park and to accommodate the other visitors, please limit the number of students in any one area to 20 or fewer.

Park Grounds

- Mariposaville Garden - pollinator habitat and garden with informational signs; south of the parking lot
- Main Garden - native and xeric plant demonstration garden with bird feeders; south of the Visitor Center
- Outdoor classroom (in Main Garden) – a place to meet with your class(es) for a whole group activity
- Wildlife viewing areas (3) - Candelaria Wetlands at northeast end of parking lot (includes naturalist notebook tile work), Candelaria Farms Preserve at far east side of the Park, and the Observation Pond on the west side of the Visitor Center
- Group Shelter – For lunch, snack or whole group activity (note: this is the *only* area where eating is permitted) outside of the Education Center

Visitor Center (please explore these areas in small, quiet groups)

- Observation room - watch and listen to life on the observation pond from this beautiful glass-walled room; browse books from our library, examine exhibit cases
- Discovery Room - hands-on, kid-friendly displays about the Middle Rio Grande *bosque* ecosystem
- Exhibit Hall - exhibits about the Rio Grande and bosque, including a well pump that brings water up from the water table (non-potable)
- Nature Shop - educational & entertaining Nature-themed merchandise; sales benefit the Friends of the Rio Grande Nature Center...***please only five students at a time directly chaperoned by an adult***