

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Teacher Ranger Teacher Program

Discipline: Interdisciplinary
Type of Project: Education
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Colorado at Denver
Effective Dates: 5/20/2014 - 3/31/2016
Funding Amount: \$655,085

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: The purpose of this program is to allow the teacher to more fully explore a national park to enrich his/her students with a clearer understanding and appreciation of park resources, and develop activities that will be used in the classroom during the school year. All teachers will be provided with general orientation to the mission and operation of the National Park Service at their designated park unit. Also, all TRT student interns will enroll in and complete the requirements for a three graduate credit hour online course in Experiential Learning with the University of Colorado Denver as part of the requirements for the TRT program with the National Park Service.

Major Activities may include the following:

- Up to 10% (approximately 25 hours) of a TRT interns time can include the following: prepares and presents a variety of formal and informal programs including orientations talks, conducted walks, guided tours, slide programs, Junior Ranger programs, demonstrations, education programs for children and adults, roving interpretation, and campfire programs.
- Up to 20% (approximately 45 hours) of a TRT's time should be spent on readings, online discussions, and coursework assigned by the CU Denver Experiential Learning course instructors.
- Approximately 70% (160 hours of effort) of a TRT's time should be spent on a major educational project which will include NPS park themes, scientific data, primary sources, and educational resources. This major project will fulfill the requirements of both the NPS program and the CU Denver Experiential Learning course. Examples of appropriate educational projects are provided on the TRT Project Agreement form.
- Each TRT will be required to produce at least one lesson plan based on NPS themes, scientific data, primary documents and educational resources. This will fulfill the requirements of both the NPS program and the CU Denver Experiential Learning course.
- Conducts independent research on varied topics for the purpose of providing resource education programs. Learns about park resources by attending in-park training, reading park research materials and maps, and by interviewing/shadowing other park rangers or staff, researchers, and other professionals.
- Works to identify and develop curriculum-based learning activities relevant to both park resources and the teaching needs of the school district or organization.
- Assists with data collection and other resource management efforts.
- Presents programs to other teachers, administrators, students, and schools during National Park Week.
- Provides statistics to the National Park Service for both in-park and in-classroom programs.
- Other agreed upon activities

This project will:

- Provide teachers with place-based learning experiences.
- Provide access to the rich resources of the national parks for inclusion into classrooms and schools.
- Provide teachers with new knowledge and teacher skills related to the resources and themes interpreted in the National Park Service.
- Provide parks with the expertise of teachers to inform and shape park education programs and services.
- Provide teachers with three graduate credit hours in Experiential Learning that can apply towards their recertification or re-licensure.

Keywords: Teacher Ranger Teacher (TRT), WASO Office of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers, University of Colorado at Denver