

Confluence Park Field Trip Details

The San Antonio River Foundation's partner, the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) would like to extend an invitation to all schools to participate in field trip opportunities at Confluence Park.

The highly skilled SARA Education Team offers free and original programming for K-12 students Tuesdays through Thursdays in Bexar, Wilson, Karnes and Goliad Counties. Education programming is aligned to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

It is our mission to engage, educate and empower students to make informed decisions about the conservation and protection of the San Antonio River watershed through thought-provoking, hands-on and inquiry-driven explorations. Nature-based and place-based programming are pillars in our field trip programming. We serve to augment what educators are teaching in the classroom with real-world examples that are locally relevant to the students. We encourage curiosity, observation, discussion, reflection, and action during field trips.

In educational partnership, a member of the River Authority or River Foundation will contact you regarding your request. Field trip requests can be submitted at <http://confluencepark.sariverfound.org/education/>.

Eligibility

- In order to provide equal opportunity for all public school districts throughout Bexar, Wilson, Karnes, and Goliad counties, *one grade level per school and up to 3 schools per district will be considered each year*. Additional schools within a district wishing to participate will be placed on a waiting list and will be contacted if slots become available.
- Homeschool groups and private schools are eligible for one visit per year.
- All requests are evaluated on a first-come-first-serve basis and are accepted at the discretion of SARA.
- Please fill out a Field Trip Request Form. SARA Staff will contact you within a weeks' time regarding the request: <http://confluencepark.sariverfound.org/education/>.

Logistics

- All field trips are free and booked on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Field trips are only conducted on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- In order to ensure a positive, engaging experience for all students, educators and chaperones are expected to be engaged with their students' experience and assist students with their challenges.
- Field trips typically begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 12:30 p.m. with 30 minutes allotted for lunch.
- The River Foundation's Field Trip Reimbursement Program covers up to \$150 per bus and \$75 per substitute teacher. Details can be found here: <http://confluencepark.sariverfound.org/field-trip-reimbursement/>.
- All students should be prepared to participate in activities in an outdoor setting which may include adverse temperatures, uneven terrain, and potential exposure to biting/stinging insects. (Confluence Park is ADA accessible.)
- When your school's field trip reservation is confirmed, a SARA field trip coordinator will provide additional avenues for communication for the day of the field trip.
- Students, teachers, and chaperones are expected to complete SARA field trip waivers.
- Please keep smartphones out of sight.

Reservation Policy

- Field trips must be requested **at least three (3) weeks in advance**. For the best selection of dates and staff availability, contact us via the request form as early as possible <http://confluencepark.sariverfound.org/education/>.
- Field trip requests are **pending** until processed with confirmed dates by SARA staff.
- **Confirmations** and other important field trip details including pre and post trip activities will be sent to the email address provided in the initial request.

Chaperone Requirements

For the safety of students and staff, SARA requires that student groups be accompanied at all times by an appropriate number of adult teachers or chaperones. Teachers and chaperones are expected to ensure that students behave appropriately and are engaged in the field trip activities.

- A chaperone-to-student ratio of 1:10 is **required** for all field trips. For every ten (10) students, there should be one adult actively monitoring the group.

Late Arrival & Cancellation Policy

- If your group is running late, SARA cannot guarantee that all activities will occur as originally planned.
- In the event that the weather, park conditions, or unforeseeable circumstances prevent the field trip to proceed as planned, SARA will contact the field trip organizer as soon as possible.
- A rescheduled field trip is not guaranteed.

Recommendations

Opportunities for a snack time are available if the school brings fruit or pre-packaged snacks for their students. We strongly encourage this or let us know you would like to hold an early lunch for your students.

- We request participants bring their own reusable water-drinking containers.
- For educational resources and materials, visit: <https://www.sara-tx.org/education-outreach>.

What will students learn on a field trip?

SARA Field Trips are designed to be grade-appropriate, hands-on, interactive, science driven and incorporate S.T.E.A.M. into the major themes of Watersheds, Ecosystems, and Resource Leadership. Depending on the students' grade level, some of the topics may include:

Watersheds

- Measuring biotic and abiotic factors as tools for assessing water quality.
- How landscape use can affect water quality.
- Point source and non-point source pollution.
- STEAM related career development in watershed management and sustainability.
- Erosion: causes, effects, and management.

Ecosystems

- Restoration and preservation of natural areas.
- Environmental services provided by native landscapes.
- Endangered species conservation.

- Scientific identification methods and classification of organisms.
- Plant identification and diversity indexing.
- Citizen science investigations.
- Migratory species support (waterfowl, pollinators, and songbirds).
- Evaluating biodiversity in riparian habitats.
- Species adaptations and ecological relationships.

Resource Leadership

- Freshwater impacts on coastal bays and estuaries.
- How water resources can drive economies on multiple scales.
- Community health and wellness as it relates to access to recreational opportunities.
- Decision making on regional and global scales.
- The infusion of art into public areas and green spaces.
- Career paths in Watershed Stewardship.
- Innovation in the field of sustainable practices.

For questions, please contact confluencepark@sariverfound.org.