

# Teacher Planning Packet 2021-2022



## Day Programs

[www.mcdowellec.org](http://www.mcdowellec.org)  
Phone: 205.387.1806

105 DeLong Road  
Nauvoo, Alabama 35578

# Welcome to the McDowell Environmental Center!

Welcome to the most incredible field trip experience your students will ever have! At McDowell Environmental Center (MEC), our philosophy is to teach students in the great outdoors and give them an experience impossible to have in an indoor classroom. They will learn by seeing nature up close... wading into a stream to catch invertebrates, touching sandstone canyon walls, identifying trees using a dichotomous key... You get the idea!



We offer the best in hands-on environmental science in a 1,140-acre outdoor classroom. We also offer fun, team-building classes that work wonders for the group dynamics of your class and individual challenges that build students' self-confidence. Our instructors have been trained in a child-centered, experiential approach to teaching and are passionate about sharing the natural world with students and adults.

Once you contact us and confirm your trip, we will guide your planning process. **Please read through this packet very thoroughly as the first step in planning your trip.** If you plan to bring multiple grade levels, consult with us about how to provide different classes for each grade level. Each class variance allows students who are returning to receive new information and experiences.

We can't wait to meet you and your students! This trip will be the most magical and educational trip of their lives!

Please email [pc@campmcdowell.org](mailto:pc@campmcdowell.org) or call 205-387-1806 ext. 108 with any questions you have.

Beth Dille, Director &  
Kim Corson, Program Coordinator

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## **TRIP COST: \$33 per person**

For every ten students who attend, one adult may come free. Additional adults may attend for full price.

**Please note that lunch may be an option for day groups, but has an added cost of \$7, making the price \$40.** To utilize the Climbing Wall, Power Pole, and Trust Swing, add \$15 per field group/per class.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Program Details and Planning	2-4
Contract	5-7
Field Group List Template	8
Curriculum Guide	9-18
Parent Letter	19
Student/Adult Health and Release Form	20-21
Chaperone Letter & Information	22
Student & Chaperone Guidelines	23
Health and Release Form Cover Sheet	24
Directions to McDowell	25

# **PROGRAM DETAILS**

## **Facilities**

Our diverse forests, streams, canyons, ponds, waterfalls, meadows, hiking trails, and ropes course serve as our classroom, rain or shine. In case of truly inclement weather, we have and use indoor teaching areas.

## **Meals**

Depending on the number of residential students in attendance at the time, we *may* be able to provide lunch for day groups, for an additional cost of \$7.00. If our dining hall is full, or we are unable to provide your group with lunch, your group will need to bring their own lunches. We can provide water coolers and picnic location for your students' lunch. **Special dietary needs can usually be accommodated with ADVANCE notice and planning.**

## **Services Provided**

Our experienced staff handles the entire program for you. We plan, teach and supply materials for all classes. We are here to help with pre-trip planning and are available to make a presentation for teachers, students, parents or school administration as needed.

## **The Lead Teacher's Role**

Most of the Lead Teacher's responsibilities deal with pre-trip preparations. The enclosed *Contract* (pgs. 5-7) lists your responsibilities and the Lead Teacher Timeline (pg. 3) helps you to sequence them. During the program we encourage you to be a participant, learning along with your students.

## **Making a Reservation**

To make a reservation, call or email us (see previous page for contact information). New schools must send a non-refundable confirmation fee within 2 weeks of your request to be placed on the calendar. The fee is \$200.00 for reservations of 50 or fewer students, and \$400.00 for reservations of more than 50 students. The confirmation fee is waived for annually returning schools. We try to honor all date requests, however, this is not guaranteed. Availability is based upon space that residential groups have not filled.

## **Cancellation & Billing Policy**

In the event of cancellation, the school is responsible for a payment of 10% of the number of participants on the Reservation Confirmation. An accurate count of student participants is due at least 60 days prior to your scheduled trip date. Once the 60-day deadline has passed, the school is responsible for a payment of 90% of the number of reserved student participants noted on the Reservation Confirmation.

## **Health and Release Forms Information**

We make every reasonable effort to ensure the health and safety of your students while they are here. In order for us to meet this goal, it is important that your **Health and Release Forms arrive at Camp McDowell 14 DAYS PRIOR to your trip.** *All participants (including chaperones and teachers)* must complete and sign our Health and Release Form to attend. Student forms must be signed by parents or guardians. Students without a completed & signed Form may not come.

**If you have the bulk of your forms completed and are waiting on one or two, it is much easier for us to receive most forms on time than to accommodate late form arrivals. Please mail.**

## **Emergency Guidelines**

Upon your arrival you will be briefed on emergency procedures by the MEC staff. If advanced medical care is required, the patient can be taken to Walker Baptist Medical Center in Jasper, 15 miles away. One chaperone or teacher must drive separately so that a vehicle will be at the center in the event that an emergency should occur.

## **Students with Special Needs**

We can customize our classes to make them fun and accessible for most students. Please discuss any special needs with us ahead of time so that we can be prepared to meet them.

## **Teacher and Chaperone Guidelines**

There must be a minimum of 1 adult chaperone for each field group. MEC recommends a 1:10 adult/student ratio including teachers. Chaperones can help make your trip easier, but if not chosen properly, they can make it more difficult. It is worthwhile to take the time to choose your chaperones carefully.

## **Teacher Credit**

McDowell Environmental Center, a PowerSchool (previously AMSTI) affiliate, provides people of all ages the vital tools needed to understand the environment in which they live. Teachers are given a certificate, reflecting the time spent in classes and activities at MEC which most school systems accept for professional development credit.

## **State Standards**

Our curriculum is correlated to multi-state Courses of Study standards for Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, and Language Arts, as well as Next Generation Science Standards. Please see our website for detailed information about how our classes correlate to these standards:

[www.mcdowelllec.org](http://www.mcdowelllec.org)

# **LEAD TEACHER TIMELINE**

## **As Soon As Possible**

- Email ***Reservation Confirmation*** (as well as **deposit** for new schools)
- New Schools: Arrange a parent and/or student pre-trip meeting at your school
- Recruit *physically-active* chaperones: at least one for every field group
- Arrange for transportation through your school or private charter
- Collect a deposit from students to secure their spot on the trip (suggestion)

## **3 MONTHS prior**

- Email the completed and signed 3-page ***Contract*** (pgs. 5-7)
- Send out the ***Health and Release Forms*** (pgs. 20-21)

## **1 MONTH prior**

- Email the ***Field Group Lists*** (example on pg. 8)
- Confirm your final numbers of participating students and adults
- Collect all ***Health and Release Forms***
- Collect the remainder of student payment (suggestion)
- Have a meeting with your chaperones to prepare them for the trip expectations (see pgs. 20-23)

## **2-3 WEEKS prior**

- Collect and mail all ***Health and Release Forms*** to us

### **1 WEEK prior**

- Contact us by email or phone to check for any last minute updates and details
- Make enough copies of the Field Group Lists for all of your chaperones and co-teachers

### **DAY of the TRIP**

- Be sure everyone has appropriate clothes for weather, and water bottles
- Hand out copies of the Field Group Lists to all of your chaperones and co-teachers
- Bring the original ***Health and Release Forms*** and ***Signed Health/Release Form Cover Sheet***

### **ARRIVAL at CAMP:**

- Meet the MEC staff greeters at the Welcome Center
- Give any paperwork and last-minute group changes to the staff greeters
- Relax and have a great time!

## **Helpful Hints For Planning Your Trip**

Here are some helpful hints for planning your day trip to the McDowell Environmental Center:

### **Have your students wear name tags.**

They can be as simple as pieces of masking tape with the student's names on them. This allows our staff and your chaperones to call the students by name in class.

### **Divide the students into Field Groups of 10-12.**

Please email this list to us 2 weeks before the trip. By dividing them before you come, we can move right into the classes upon arrival. Please assign one or two chaperones to each field group.

### **Plan snacks into your trip.**

Especially for younger students (1st, 2nd and 3rd grade), it is a good idea to plan for snacks. Possible snack times include: on the bus, immediately after you get here, mid-morning, or right before you leave. ***Please let us know when you plan these, so that we can adjust our schedule accordingly. Also, if students are taking their snacks with them to MEC classes, have them carry their own snacks in a light backpack.***

**Ensure that all students and adults have the signed *Health and Release Forms* and that you complete the *Health/Release Form Cover Sheet* (pgs. 20-21, 24)** All students and adults attending need to have a signed health and release form to participate. Please bring any last forms on the day of the trip.

### **Have students bring a change of shoes and possibly clothes.**

If your students are taking *Canoeing, Aquatic Adventures or Stream Studies* they will get wet and muddy and may need a change of shoes and clothes.

### **Have students bring water bottles.**

Students need to keep themselves hydrated while outside as their activities are often physical in nature.

### **Have students dress appropriately.**

Rain gear, warm clothes (if cold) and hats are great! **Closed-toed shoes only:** no sandals or crocs.

# McDowell Environmental Center DAY Contract

EMAIL to pc@campmcdowell.org

*Please email this contract 3 months prior to your visit*

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Reserved date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary School Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Best way to contact (circle one): School Phone / Cell Phone / Email Best Time to Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

**Arrival time:** \_\_\_\_\_ (8:30am recommended) **Departure time:** \_\_\_\_\_ (\*2:30pm is recommended)

Are you planning to eat lunch with us? YES / NO

Are you bringing a snack for your students? YES / NO If so, what time during the schedule? \_\_\_\_\_

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**STUDENTS:** # of boys : \_\_\_\_\_ # of girls: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL # of STUDENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*ADULTS:** # of men: \_\_\_\_\_ # of women: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL # of ADULTS: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please include all **teachers** in the adult count*

**TOTAL #:** \_\_\_\_\_

# FIELD GROUPS: \_\_\_\_\_ (limit to 12 students/group)

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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CENTER:** Assist with pre-trip planning; provide complete educational programming; inform participants of their responsibilities, camp rules and emergency procedures; prepare meals and evening snacks; clean and maintain facilities and grounds, and provide a safe and wholesome atmosphere.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEAD TEACHER:** Make a reservation (new schools- submit deposit) and return contract; arrange transportation; arrange for one physically-able chaperone for each cabin and field group; communicate with students, parents, and chaperones about the trip; collect fees & medicines; email field group and cabin lists one month prior to trip; mail health and risk acknowledgment forms at least 2 weeks prior to your trip; participate in the program with chaperones and students, and submit final payment.

**DAMAGE:** The Center reserves the right to send home any child who becomes ill, destroys property, behaves aggressively or takes any other action detrimental to other students or the program. The school will be responsible for providing transportation in such cases, and for any damage to the facilities and equipment. No refunds will be made under these conditions. The Center cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to property brought to the Center. Please encourage students to leave valuables and large amounts of cash at home.

**INVOICE:** On your last day at McDowell, we will give you an invoice for the balance of your payment. Payment is due within 30 days after your trip.

**I agree to the terms of this contract and agree that my group will abide by all McDowell policies.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Lead Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**\*Please complete the next page\***

# McDowell Environmental Center DAY Contract

## Daytime Class Selection

Choose 3-6 hours depending on your schedule.

Choose extra classes for large groups- all students will not be able to take the same classes.

*Class descriptions are found in the Teacher Planning Packet or at [www.mcdowellc.org](http://www.mcdowellc.org)*

<p><b><u>Skills-Based Classes</u></b></p> <p>___ Meet a Map 1.5 hr</p> <p>___ Navigation 1.5 hr</p> <p>___ Survival Skills 1.5 hr <b>or</b> 3 hr</p> <p>___ Canoeing (5th &amp; up) 1.5 hr</p> <p>(**Please select 1.5 hour <u>BACKUP</u> to Canoeing IF it cannot run due to safety**)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(Backup class choice)</p>	<p><b><u>Science Classes</u></b></p> <p>___ Aquatic Adventures 1.5 hr <b>or</b> 3 hr</p> <p>___ Down to Earth 3 hr</p> <p>___ Forest Connections 1.5hr <b>or</b> 3 hr</p> <p>___ Hop, Slither, Slide 1.5hr</p> <p>___ Meet a Tree 3 hr</p> <p>___ Rock Query 3 hr</p> <p>___ Stream Studies 3 hr</p> <p>___ Value of a Tree 3 hr</p>
<p><b><u>Team Building Classes</u></b></p> <p>___ Climbing Wall (5th &amp; up) 1.5 hr</p> <p>___ Power Pole (7th &amp; up) 1.5 hr</p> <p>___ Team Challenge (5th &amp; up) 3 hr</p> <p>___ Team Adventure 1.5 hr</p>	<p><b><u>Recreation &amp; Humanities Classes</u></b></p> <p>___ Art in Nature 1.5 hr <b>or</b> 3hr</p> <p>___ Authors &amp; Explorers 3 hr</p> <p>___ Connections 1.5 hr</p> <p>___ Mysterious Medley 1.5 hr <b>or</b> 3 hr</p> <p>___ Native Americans &amp; Earth 3 hr</p> <p>___ Nature Hike 1.5 hr <b>or</b> 3 hr</p> <p>___ Trail of Discovery (6th and up) 6 hr</p>

**\*\*To participate in all classes - everyone must have a completed Health & Release Form\*\***

**NOTE: Trail of Discovery requires that all participants bring a backpack and 2 water bottles**

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What **experiences** have your students had with the outdoors, environmental education or field trips?

Please list any **objectives, themes, goals, vocabulary, teaching philosophies or local environmental issues** that you would like for us to emphasize while you are here:

**\*PLEASE complete the last page\***

# McDowell Environmental Center CONTRACT

## GROUP PROFILE

*The following information will help the staff at MEC have a better understanding of the needs of your group.*

Have any of your teachers and chaperones attended MEC before? \_\_\_\_

Have any of your students attended MEC before? \_\_\_\_ If so, approximately how many? \_\_\_\_\_

**How would you characterize your school?** (Choose all that apply)

\_\_\_ Private    \_\_\_ Public    \_\_\_ Religious Affiliation    \_\_\_ Open Classroom    \_\_\_ Montessori  
\_\_\_ Self-contained classroom    \_\_\_ Students move from class to class    \_\_\_ Block Schedule

**Please include a description of the dynamics or your group:**

What specific **student needs** should we be aware of? (i.e. social/emotional/behavioral concerns, severe allergic reactions, physical limitations, learning needs, etc...)

**How will your group be arriving at MEC?** (#'s if known)    \_\_\_\_ Bus(es)    \_\_\_\_ Car(s)



# FIELD GROUP LISTS

*\*Please confirm the number of field groups your school will be allotted with MEC before creating this list\**

- Divide your class into field groups of 10 to 12 students and at least 1 adult.
- At least one adult must be with a field group at all times.
- It is important to group students in socially compatible groups.
- If you are bringing multiple grade levels, group by grade.
- If teachers are “floating,” and not assigned a group, please still list all teachers’ names on the bottom.

**EMAIL** to [pc@campmcdowell.org](mailto:pc@campmcdowell.org)

***Please email this list 1 month prior to your visit.***

**Please organize field group lists in the following format (or one similar):**

Excel Spreadsheets work great!

<b>Field Group #1</b>	<b>Field Group #2</b>	<b>Field Group #3</b>	<b>Field Group #4</b>
1. STUDENT NAME	1. STUDENT NAME	1. STUDENT NAME	1. STUDENT NAME
2. STUDENT NAME	2. STUDENT NAME	2. STUDENT NAME	2. STUDENT NAME
3. STUDENT NAME	3. STUDENT NAME	3. STUDENT NAME	3. STUDENT NAME
4. STUDENT NAME	4. STUDENT NAME	4. STUDENT NAME	4. STUDENT NAME
5. STUDENT NAME	5. STUDENT NAME	5. STUDENT NAME	5. STUDENT NAME
6. STUDENT NAME	6. STUDENT NAME	6. STUDENT NAME	6. STUDENT NAME
7. STUDENT NAME	7. STUDENT NAME	7. STUDENT NAME	7. STUDENT NAME
8. STUDENT NAME	8. STUDENT NAME	8. STUDENT NAME	8. STUDENT NAME
9. STUDENT NAME	9. STUDENT NAME	9. STUDENT NAME	9. STUDENT NAME
10. STUDENT NAME	10. STUDENT NAME	10. STUDENT NAME	10. STUDENT NAME
11. STUDENT NAME	11. STUDENT NAME	11. STUDENT NAME	11. STUDENT NAME
12. STUDENT NAME	12. STUDENT NAME	12. STUDENT NAME	12. STUDENT NAME
13. Chaperone	13. Chaperone	13. Chaperone	13. Chaperone
14. Chaperone	14. Chaperone	14. Chaperone	14. Chaperone

**Mr. Teacher & Mrs. Teacher will float**

# **CURRICULUM GUIDE**

## **Mission Statement**

The Mission of McDowell Environmental Center is to connect people to the environment, teach respect for the Earth and its beings, and to promote a commitment to lifelong learning.

## **Program Objectives**

- The students will increase awareness and understanding of the environment.
- The students will develop a sense of responsibility for the environment.
- The students will gain a better sense of cooperation and community.

**Outdoor environmental education embraces teachable moments which happen regularly in an outdoor classroom. The MEC Instructors are professional educators. Each instructor will have their own teaching style and choose activities for classes that best suit their personality. Your students will not stay with the same instructor for the entire time. Because of this, your student groups will not have an identical experience in every class. Instructors will cover the key terms and principles of each class, which are correlated to multi-state Courses of Study, as well as Next Generation Science Standards.**

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## **DAYTIME CLASSES**

### **Science Classes:**

#### ***AQUATIC ADVENTURES***

Lesson Overview: Learners will predict how different characteristics of freshwater environments impact the types of organisms found in the environment, observe adaptations specific to those aquatic environments, and identify macroinvertebrates. ***Students should come prepared to get wet in this class. Students must wear appropriate closed toed shoes such as old shoes or rain boots.***

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: Highly variable; ranges from vehicle transportation to site, small, steep hike to stream bed, or .5 to 1.5 mile hike.

Activity Level: Varies with site selected by instructor. Accommodations for all abilities available, but requires notice.

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to conduct an experiment on a freshwater environments using observation of, abundance of, and or diversity of macroinvertebrates. They will gain skills in the following areas:

1. Making observations of and characterizing unfamiliar organisms.
2. Considering how changing conditions in freshwater environments (naturally or human-induced) can change the composition of aquatic life in that environment.
3. Constructing a reasonable hypothesis about macroinvertebrates and their aquatic habitats, testing it, and discussing the results.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Planning and Carrying Out Investigations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Structure and Function, Patterns

#### ***DOWN TO EARTH***

Lesson Overview: Through observation and exploration of habitats at Camp McDowell, learners assess the impact of a reclaimed coal mine on the local ecosystem. Learners observe sedimentary rock types associated with coal

formation, as well as the weathering and erosion processes that result in sedimentation. Learners close the class by discussing the need for the responsible use of natural resources.

Total Time: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: ~1.5 miles

Activity Level: Moderate hike; includes a ladder and stream crossings that are not universally accessible.

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to consider the geosphere in the following ways:

1. Identify that sandstone and coal are sedimentary rocks that tell the geologic history of our area, and observe the modern impact of weathering on those rocks.
2. Observe and describe the impact of coal mining on the geosphere and biosphere in the region.
3. Link commonly used materials to finite resources extracted from Earth and discuss the reasons for producing and conserving those resources (ESS3.A; ESS3.C)

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Analyzing and Interpreting Data, Constructing Explanations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Scale, Proportion, and Quantity, Cause and Effect

## ***FOREST CONNECTIONS***

Lesson Overview: Students will hike through the forest observing the connections between Earth's spheres. Particular focus on specific adaptations and connections among plants and animals in the biosphere. Students will play games to better understand the reason for typical adaptations expressed by forest organisms.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: ~.75 mile

Activity Level: Can be modified for universal accessibility with notification

Learning Goals: At the end of this session, learners will be able to relate the biosphere at Camp McDowell to other spheres in the following ways:

1. Articulate ways in which organisms in the forest are connected to one another through specific adaptations, integrated food webs, and by exploiting specific niches.
2. Link the non-living habitat (atmosphere, geosphere, hydrosphere) to the biosphere.
3. Understand that removing something - living or not - from the habitat can have major consequences for that area.
4. Insects display a wide variety of adaptations tailored to their environment, are vital to the health of ecosystems, and have changed over time to suit specific roles within that environment.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Constructing Explanations, Planning and Carrying Out Investigations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Structure and Function, Systems and System Models

## ***HOP, SLITHER & SLIDE***

Lesson Overview: Learners confront and dispel fears of reptiles by meeting snakes, other reptiles and amphibians, and touching/feeding/engaging with them. Instructors handle live animals and discuss conservation and human impacts on reptile and amphibian communities. Incorporation of various kinesthetic learning activities are included to cement the differences between reptiles and amphibians.

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Hiking Distance: N/A

Activity Level: Universally accessible

Learning Goals: Learners will:

- 1) Describe, with evidence, the differences between reptiles and amphibians and relate those traits to habitat requirements.

2) Explore specific adaptations of observed reptiles and amphibians and describe the role each plays in Alabama's ecosystem.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Developing and Using Models

Crosscutting Concepts: Structure and Function

## ***MEET A TREE***

Lesson Overview: Learners explore the relationship of Earth's four spheres to one of the forest's principal plants: the tree. Students discuss how energy cycles in trees, the structure and functions of trees in the forest ecosystem, and identify common Alabama tree species.

Total Time: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: ~.75 miles

Activity Level: Low to moderate; can be modified for all abilities

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to describe the value of Alabama trees to the forest ecosystem in the following ways:

1. Tree species have unique physical characteristics that can be used to identify them, and all trees have specific parts that function together to transfer energy and nutrients, allowing the tree to grow.
2. Trees are an important component of forest ecosystems that impact and are impacted by the atmosphere, biosphere, geosphere, and hydrosphere.
3. Energy can be traced throughout the life cycle of a tree.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Asking Questions, Developing and Using Models

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Energy and Matter, Structure and Function

## ***ROCK QUERY***

Lesson Overview: Learners will hike into a sandstone canyon to better understand how rocks form and engage with rock samples to discern the relationship between sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rocks. Learners will observe and consider the impact of the geosphere on local ecosystems, and, in turn, the role the hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere play in shaping the geosphere.

Total Time: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: ~ 1.5 miles

Activity Level: Moderate to strenuous hike; includes a ladder and stream crossings that are not universally accessible.

Learning Goals: At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to think critically about the geosphere in the following ways:

1. Rocks have unique properties based upon their origin. They can cycle between igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic as a result of processes like weathering, transport, and mountain building.
2. The geosphere is one of Earth's major systems that shapes and is shaped by all of Earth's other systems (biosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere), revealing changes over time.
3. Different rock types are found throughout Alabama and allow us to predict places to mine for resources.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Developing and Using Models, Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Stability and Change, Scale, Proportion, and Quantity

## ***STREAM STUDIES***

Lesson Overview: Learners will assess the water quality of a stream using chemical testing and bioassessments, and discuss the human and natural impacts to stream quality. Learners will relate the stream to local and regional

watersheds, and discuss how changes to individual streams can impact water quality in the watershed. ***Students should come prepared to get wet in this class. Students must wear appropriate closed toed shoes such as old shoes or rain boots.***

Total Time: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: .5 - 1 mile

Activity Level: Moderate with a short, steep hike up a stream; not easily modified for all abilities

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to discuss the relationship among biodiversity, water chemistry, and watershed health in the following ways:

1. Stream health is a combination of natural (biologic, geologic, atmospheric, and hydrologic) and human induced (pollution, diversion) factors.
2. Stream health can be monitored using biotic and abiotic assessments.
3. Stream health is an important component of watershed health, and watershed health can be strongly impacted by regional land use choices.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Asking Questions, Planning and Carrying Out Investigations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Cause and Effect, Systems and System Models

## ***VALUE OF A TREE***

Lesson Overview: Learners will explore the economic, ecologic, and recreational value of forest communities while hiking through a variety of types of forests at Camp McDowell. Learners will discuss and observe the impact of using forests as resources, and explore aspects of forestry management.

Total Time: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: 1 mile

Activity Level: Can be modified to meet some accessibility needs with notification

Learning Goals: At the end of this session, learners will be able to discuss the role of forests as resources, and how forest ecosystems are impacted by use in the following ways:

1. Forests are a renewable resource that are harvested for production of lumber and paper products, but different methods of harvesting impact forest health in different ways.
2. Forest ecosystems are always changing as a result of natural and human impacts, but healthy forests are characterized by high biodiversity and dominance of regionally important tree species. Some species have specific reproductive strategies that are interrupted by human interactions.
3. Forests are economically valuable beyond traditional harvesting, and sustainable forestry management considers economic, environmental, and recreational activities associated with forest resources.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information, Constructing Explanations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Energy and Matter, Structure and Function

## **Recreation and Humanities Classes:**

### ***ART IN NATURE***

Themes: Community; Connections; McDowell Stewards; The Earth Provides

Lesson Overview: Learners will explore nature through the lens of an artist. They will learn about nature artists, develop an innovative approach to creating art, and present and share their creative expression. This class will be a unique experience for students to understand that art surrounds them in all places.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: varied, .5 to 1 mile

Activity Level: Can be modified for universal accessibility with notification

Learning Goals: At the end of this session, learners will be able to:

1. Create art using natural and/or found elements and materials
2. Learn about nature artists such as Andy Goldsworthy, and understand how their art is an expression of themselves as well as how it affects those that observe what they have created.
3. Students will be able to identify how nature art can be used to bring significance to a place, person or experience.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Scientific Practices Highlighted: Obtaining, Evaluating, Communicating Information and Constructing Explanations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Investigate, Make, Analyze, Reflect

## ***AUTHORS & EXPLORERS***

Lesson Overview: Learners will connect with and be inspired by natural features by exploring McDowell's woods and journaling their experiences. Learners will be prompted with sensory awareness and observation activities to record and share their experiences using sketches, poetry, and word art. Learners will gain knowledge about the scientific and artistic value of journaling and articulate written expression by relating their experiences to those of famous authors and naturalists.

Total Time: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: varied, .5 to .75 mile

Activity Level: Can be modified for universal accessibility with notification

Learning Goals: At the end of this session, learners will be able to use natural landscapes as inspiration for the following:

1. View and describe the world from different perspectives, including the perspective of a natural object, and consider how perspective impacts understanding of the world.
2. Details and analogies improve descriptive writing and help the author convey information to the reader.
3. Relating their experience to the ways authors, explorers, and scientists use sketching and writing in journals as tools to improve their trade.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Developing and Using Models

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Patterns, Scale, Proportion, and Quantity

## ***CONNECTIONS***

Lesson Overview: Learners reinforce their understanding of connections between Earth's spheres, human stewardship, and principles of conservation. Learners connect their experiences at McDowell with their lives, and consider ways to share their knowledge when they return home.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: Varies

Activity Level: Low; Can be modified for all abilities

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to relate the classes they have taken to one another and to their own lives in the following ways:

1. All Earth's spheres are intricately connected to one another.
2. Humans play an important role in the health of all ecosystems, and we are stewards of our environment.
3. Small changes in our personal behaviors can have a major impact on the environment.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: System and System Models

## ***MYSTERIOUS MEDLEY***

Lesson Overview: Learners get a unique opportunity to experience Camp McDowell like no other group. Instructors build a class tailored to their interests and expertise and correlated to the chosen theme. Learners will explore a topic with their instructor, and experience the excitement of natural investigation and inquiry. The combination of the skillset of the instructor, the passion they bring to the subject, and the opportunity for open inquiry and investigation result in a one-of-a-kind experience that creates future naturalists.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: Varied

Activity Level: Can be modified for universal accessibility with notification

Learning Goals: Vary based on chosen theme, but are integrated with those from other classes chosen by instructor. Each experience is unique and tailored to the interest of the field group.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Varied

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Varied

## ***NATIVE AMERICANS & THE EARTH***

Themes: Community; Connections, Cycles, and Systems; The Earth Provides; McDowell Stewards

Lesson Overview: Learners will engage with Native American artifacts, visit a reconstruction of a typical Mississippian Era village, and participate in activities and games to learn respect for natural resources and different cultures.

Total Time: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: .75 mile

Activity Level: Low to moderate; can be modified for alternate abilities, however some experiences require hiking a short but strenuous hill.

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to discuss the relationship between humans and the natural environment through the lens of Alabama's indigenous people in the following ways:

1. Compare the culture and resources of American Indians to today's culture.
2. Explain how American Indian culture changed over time because of changing reliance on natural resources and environmental changes.
3. List and locate on a map the four major tribes of American Indians that lived in Alabama before European settlers, and describe how they were impacted by one another through trade.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Constructing Explanations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Stability and Change, Cause and Effect

## ***NATURE HIKE***

Lesson Overview: Learners hike through the forest on a favorite trail of their instructor's choosing. On the trail, open exploration and inquiry are highly encouraged and learners can practice their observation and interpretive skills on plants, animals, insects, and tracks! May include the use of field guides, dichotomous keys, hand lenses, and nature journals.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: varied, usually .75 mile

Activity Level: Can be modified for universal accessibility with notification

Learning Goals: Vary based on chosen theme, but are integrated with those from other classes chosen by instructor. Each experience is unique and tailored to the interest of the field group.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: varied

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: varied

## **TRAIL OF DISCOVERY**

Lesson Overview: Learners have an immersive, full day experience in nature. Aspects of MEC courses on forest ecology, geology, and Native American cultures, as well as those selected by the teacher, are highlighted on a full day hike. Learners practice appropriate behavior in the woods, enjoy a picnic lunch, and, because of the full day nature of the course, have opportunities to engage more fully with chosen concepts. ***A packed lunch will be provided.***

***All participants need to bring a backpack, 2 water bottles, and comfortable hiking shoes.***

Total Time: Full day (morning and afternoon class session, lunch enjoyed in the field)

Hiking Distance: ~3 miles

Activity Level: Moderate to strenuous; experience cannot be adapted for all abilities, but modifications can be made to accommodate some different abilities.

Learning Goals: Learning goals are dependent, in part, on the content choices of the teacher and other courses taken during the learners' trip. In addition to science content, learners can expect to become more independent in nature in the following ways:

1. Recognizing the behaviors necessary for thriving long-term in an outdoor situation and the ways humans can protect the environment around them.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Planning and Carrying Out Investigations

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Systems and System Models, Energy and Matter, Patterns

## **Skills-Based Classes:**

### **CANOEING**

Lesson Overview: Learners canoe on a placid canyon stream among 80-foot bluffs and cascading waterfalls. Participants practice communication skills and consider the relationship between Newton's Second and Third Laws to their canoe travel. ***Students should be prepared to get wet during this activity. Canoeing is not recommended in cold months. In cases of extreme weather, high wind or high water, please choose an alternate activity for your group.***

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Hiking Distance: Minimal hiking, but includes steep staircase

Activity Level: Moderate; cannot be modified for alternate abilities

Learning Goals: By the end of this session learners will:

1. Learn how to communicate with one another to support travel on a stream.
2. Relate the speed of their canoe to Newton's 2nd Law:  $\text{Force} = \text{Mass} * \text{Acceleration}$ .
3. Relate the success of their paddling efforts to Newton's 3rd Law: Every action has an equal and opposite reaction.
4. Learn vocabulary and care for canoeing equipment.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Developing and Using Models

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Cause and Effect, Energy and Matter

### **MEET A MAP**

Lesson Overview: Learners practice their visual spatial skills creating and using a variety of maps, and work together to solve indoor and outdoor courses.

Total Time: 1.5 hours



Hiking Distance: Minimal hiking; walking over mild terrain without a trail is included

Activity Level: Low; can be universally accessible with prior notice but may omit outdoor portion of course.

Learning Goals: Upon completion of this session, participants will better understand mapping in the following ways:

1. Become familiar with using and interpreting the pieces of maps (e.g. scale, legend, contour intervals, rivers) using different scaled maps of Camp McDowell.
2. Create a map of an area at MEC.
3. Navigate a course to find locations specified on a map.
4. Gather spatial information about the distribution of resources in an area.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Patterns; Scale, Proportion, and Quantity

## **NAVIGATION**

Lesson Overview: Learners will gain experience with a compass and learn how compasses work through demonstrations and kinesthetic activities using a compass. Learners apply their skills by completing an outdoor compass course.

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Hiking Distance: Minimal hiking; walking over mild terrain without a trail is included

Activity Level: Low; Can be modified for most abilities but may not include outdoor course

Learning Goals: At the end of this session, learners will be able to use a compass to:

1. Determine cardinal directions, read compass bearings and apply them properly.
2. Navigate an outdoor course using a compass.
3. Use a map and a compass to discern bearings properly.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information, Developing and Using Models

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Patterns

## **SURVIVAL SKILLS**

Lesson Overview: Learners will practice planning for and executing wilderness, or backcountry, travel. Learners will practice working as a team and individually to successfully prepare for being lost in a backcountry scenario, and for overnight survival in an emergency situation.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: Varied; .75-1.5 miles

Activity Level: Varied; 3 hour class not easily modified for all abilities; 1.5 hour class can be modified for most

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to use creative thinking skills to meet their basic needs in the backcountry in the following ways:

1. Identify and address the immediate needs of a group in an emergency backcountry situation.
2. Successfully identify and use natural and commonly carried objects to address short- and long-term survival needs in the wilderness while practicing Leave No Trace principles.
3. Discuss the resources available in natural settings and relating them to the success of other cultures today and in the past.

Scientific Practices Highlighted: Defining Problems, Designing Solutions

Crosscutting Concepts Addressed: Patterns

## **Team Building Classes:**

## ***CLIMBING WALL\****

Lesson Overview: Striving to climb a 40-foot wall with hand and foot holds, learners experience rock climbing and feel the exhilaration of attempting a daunting feat. Encouraged by their peers and led by a trained ropes course instructor, learners set and achieve personal goals, confront fears, and gain self-confidence in a unique outdoor experience. Students must be in 5th grade or older to participate in this activity.\*

*\*Administration discretion used*

*We charge an additional \$15.00 equipment fee per field group for this activity.*

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Activity Level: Strenuous physically and mentally; cannot be modified for universal accessibility

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will gain experience and skills in the following ways:

1. Setting, working toward, and achieving personal goals takes confidence and support from their peers.
2. Gaining personal confidence requires taking risks when an outcome is not assured, and understanding that failure is an important part of growth and success.

## ***POWER POLE\****

Lesson Overview: Learners challenge themselves to climb a 25-foot telephone pole and jump for a bell suspended nearby. This activity provides the most significant mental and emotional challenge for learners. The group setting offers emotional support for each participant, who is also supported by a trained ropes course facilitator to ensure physical safety. Students must be in 7<sup>th</sup> grade or older to participate in this activity.\*

*\*Administration discretion used*

*We charge an additional \$15.00 equipment fee per field group for this activity.*

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Activity Level: Very strenuous mentally, physically low to moderate; cannot be modified for universal accessibility

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will gain experience and skills in the following ways:

1. Setting, working toward, and achieving personal goals takes confidence and support from their peers.
2. Gaining personal confidence requires taking (perceived) risks when success is not assured, and understanding that failure is an important part of growth.
3. Trusting in yourself, others, and safety systems are important components of personal growth.

## ***TEAM CHALLENGE***

Lesson Overview: Learners will participate in a series of group problem solving activities that encourage cooperation, communication, and trust. Each class is tailored to the needs of the group and is a unique experience. The group is encouraged to review their experiences, link them to relevancy in their daily life, and extend these new ideas as they approach situations at home or in school. ***MEC facilitators will choose the activities based on the individual group's needs. Because of this, each student group will have a unique experience using different activities.***

Total Time: 3 hours

Activity Level: Easy to strenuous; can be made universally accessible with notification

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to use the following skills to help them solve problems:

1. Active listening and sharing of ideas are important components of success in group work.
2. Working with others to solve problems highlights the variety of solutions a problem may have.
3. Problem-solving skills need to be honed with practice, and are valuable in all aspects of life.

## ***TEAM ADVENTURE***

Lesson Overview: Learners will participate in a series of group problem solving activities that encourage cooperation, communication, and trust. Each class is tailored to the needs of the group and is a unique experience.

The group is encouraged to review their experiences, link them to relevancy in their daily life, and extend these new ideas as they approach situations at home or in school. ***MEC facilitators will choose the activities based on the individual group's needs. Because of this, each student group will have a unique experience using different activities.***

Total Time: 1.5 hours, no additional forms needed

Activity Level: Easy to strenuous; can be made universally accessible with notification

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, learners will be able to use the following skills to help them solve problems:

1. Active listening and sharing of ideas are important components of success in group work.
2. Working with others to solve problems highlights the variety of solutions a problem may have.
3. Problem-solving skills need to be honed with practice, and are valuable in all aspects of life.

# Parent Information & Student Forms

## PARENT LETTER



**McDowell Environmental Center**

105 Delong Road  
Nauvoo, AL 35578

Dear Parent or Guardian,

McDowell Environmental Center's philosophy is to teach students in the great outdoors and give them a lifetime of memories and experience. Your child will be learning through hands-on environmental science classes, seeing nature up close in a 1,140-acre outdoor classroom. Our instructors have been trained in a child-centered, experiential approach to teaching and are passionate about sharing the natural world with students and adults. We would like to mention a few important items worth emphasizing about your child's upcoming visit to ensure their safety and comfort while away from home.

**Appropriate Clothing:** We offer hands-on science and team building classes, so we spend most of our time outdoors, even in the rain and cold. Please help your child be prepared with appropriate clothing and gear, as indicated below. In truly inclement weather, we have ample indoor teaching space.

**Wear:**

Old clothes and closed toed shoes (*For safety, no sandals or crocs please!*)

**Bring a daypack with:**

Rain Coat

Water Bottle

Lunch & Snack (if suggested by the teacher)

Extra set of clothes if taking Aquatic Adventures or Stream Studies

1 pair of shoes and socks that can get wet or muddy

**Health and Release Form:** All students and adults must fill out a Health and Release Form. Please ensure that the student's name and your signature are on this form so that your child can participate in all of the activities.

Your child's school teachers will send home all information. The teachers from your school will select chaperones for the trip. If you have any questions regarding our program, personnel or facilities, please feel free to call us or visit our website at **[www.mcdowellec.org](http://www.mcdowellec.org)**.

Beth Dille, Director &  
Kim Corson, Program Coordinator  
[pc@campmcdowell.org](mailto:pc@campmcdowell.org)  
205.387.1806 ext. 108

School: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT or ADULT (circle one)

Updated July 23 2019

**McDowell Environmental Center - DAY GROUP****PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM**This form must be filled out by the student's **PARENT or LEGAL GUARDIAN!**

Name: (Last)	(First)	(Middle)	Date of Birth:	Sex:
Age:	Grade:	Height/Weight:	Preferred name (if different from above):	
Address: City: State: Zip Code:				
Parent/Guardian name: (Last)			(First)	
Relationship to student:				
Cell Phone:	Work Phone:		Email Address:	
Other Emergency Contact: (Last)			(First)	
Relationship to student/Phone Number:				
Primary Physician:			Physician Phone:	

**ALLERGY INFORMATION**To the best of your knowledge does the participant have any allergies? **YES / NO** (Please circle one)If **YES** was circled, please indicate the allergy below.. Please be specific:

FOODS:	
PLANTS:	
MEDICINE ALLERGIES:	
ANIMALS:	
INSECTS:	
OTHER:	

Please indicate what treatment your child should receive if exposure occurs:

**\*\* If your child is bringing an EPI-PEN, you MUST contact Stacey Glenn, at 205-387-1806 ext. 125 or  
rn@campmcdowell.org\*\***

ADDITIONAL HEALTH CONCERNS: \_\_\_\_\_

**PHOTO RELEASE:** "I give my permission for any photos or videos taken of the participant for any artwork and writing made by the participant during educational programs at Camp McDowell to be used for the public relations of the program." (Please note if you DO NOT give photo release permission)

**MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE**

"Should I or my child sustain or incur any accident or illness while attending McDowell Environmental Center (MEC) I hereby authorize the Director, their agent or a school official to execute any and all documents on my or my child's behalf, including necessary releases, which might be required by a medical facility to perform emergency care. This is to certify that I or my child is in good physical condition and that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I authorize MEC to allow medical agencies (including, but not limited to, hospitals, physician's offices, health clinics, dental clinics, pharmacies) to read the information contained in the accompanying Health Form. I agree that the information used will be limited to information necessary to fulfill the need or purpose for the disclosure. I also understand and agree that I am financially responsible for all medical treatment and other health care services provided." All health information is considered confidential and will be shared only on a need to know basis to ensure your or your child's safety.

**"This is to certify that the information provided on this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge,"**

SIGNATURE of PARENT or LEGAL GUARDIAN \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# Waiver of Liability & Release

*This form must be completed for every participant in a Camp McDowell program.  
Please read carefully before signing.*

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

All of Camp McDowell's programs ("Programs") take place in an area that includes over 1,000 acres of forests, meadows, streams, and canyons. The Programs involve physical and hazardous activities that take place in this wilderness and outdoor camp environment, including without limitation, swimming; canoeing; hiking over rough terrain or in the vicinity of water; and challenge or ropes course activities such as climbing, jumping, balancing, and being lifted or supported by a rope and harness system at heights up to thirty feet in the air.

## ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND AGREEMENT TO RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS

I, the undersigned, understand and agree that participating in any Program inherently involves risks, hazards, and dangers, including but not limited to the risks of falling, falling rocks or objects, fractures, concussions, dangerous weather, overexertion, overheating, injuries caused by a lack of fitness or conditioning, river currents, hypothermia, hostile or aggressive farm animals or wildlife, equipment failures, negligence of others, accident, injury, death, mental or emotional trauma, disability, and property damage or loss. In consideration for my being permitted to participate in a Program, I, for myself (and for my child if participant is under 19), my heirs, assigns, and personal representatives, hereby knowingly and intentionally agree to assume all risks of participating in any Program and forever release and hold harmless Camp McDowell and the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama, as well as their employees, agents, directors, volunteers, participants, guests, representatives, affiliates, and all other persons or entities acting under their direction and control ("Released Parties") from any and all liability, claims, actions, losses, and demands arising out of or relating in any way to my participation in any Program, including but not limited to those arising from travel to and from the program site or from the negligence of the Released Parties.

By signing this form I am certifying that I am capable of—and have not been advised by a medical professional to refrain from—participating in these and similar physical activities. I also consent to receive (or, if applicable, have my child receive) medical treatment that may be deemed advisable in the event of injury, accident, or illness during any Program.

This agreement is governed by and shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the state of Alabama, without any reference to its choice of law rules. I agree that any dispute arising from this agreement or in any way associated with a Program shall be brought only in the state or federal courts of Jefferson County, Alabama, and I agree to the jurisdiction and venue of those courts for any such dispute.

**I HAVE CAREFULLY READ, FULLY UNDERSTAND, AND VOLUNTARILY SIGN THIS WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND RELEASE ON BEHALF OF MYSELF AND, IF APPLICABLE, AS THE PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A PROGRAM PARTICIPANT UNDER THE AGE OF 19 YEARS.**

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Name of Program Participant

---

Date

---

Signature of Participant (If 19 Years or Older)

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Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian (If Participant Under 19 Years)

# CHAPERONE LETTER & INFORMATION



McDowell Environmental Center  
105 Delong Road  
Nauvoo, AL 35578

Dear Chaperone,

Thank you for agreeing to accompany students on their exciting trip to McDowell. As a chaperone, you will play an important role in creating a fun, safe and non-competitive learning environment. We would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about your role as a chaperone.

The lead teacher from your school will assign you a field group of 10-12 students to supervise during the day. You will be with the students the entire time during your stay. You are directly responsible for the safety and supervision of your field group. **All Chaperones must fill out the Health and Release forms provided by the lead teacher from your school.**

During classes, the McDowell Instructor will be directly responsible for the group, but they will rely on you for support and attentiveness. Please actively participate in all classes and activities that you attend. Look forward to active classes which may include hiking or wading in a stream. We appreciate your enthusiasm during these classes, as it can be a great motivator for the students!

Here are some GENERAL POLICIES FOR ADULTS:

- Smoking is not allowed indoors or in front of students. Alcohol is not allowed.
- Try not to use your cell phone around the children.
- Corporal or harsh verbal punishment is not allowed. If you experience difficulty managing the student's behavior, speak to their teacher for help.
- When you come to the Center, it is most likely that you will share our campus with other schools. We believe positive interactions among all participants create potential new friendships. Please be a model of respect to the other schools, both children and adults.

Your school may eat lunch a picnic-style lunch as a group. Work with your lead teacher to help ensure the safety of all students during lunch and do not allow students to leave the immediate area without permission. Water coolers will be provided.

In some of the classes, you and the children will get wet and muddy so wear OLD clothes and shoes. A raincoat is essential, because classes are held rain or shine. Our classes are hands-on, so be sure to bring a daypack with a water bottle. **Wear comfortable, closed toed, hiking shoes.**

Thanks for taking the time to read this letter and for agreeing to be a chaperone. Please feel free to call us if you have any questions. We look forward to meeting you!

Beth Dille, Director &  
Kim Corson, Program Coordinator

[pc@campmcdowell.org](mailto:pc@campmcdowell.org)  
205.387.1806 ext. 108

# **STUDENT & CHAPERONE TIPS**

## **Preparing Your Students**

The more prepared your students are for the trip, the quicker they will acclimate and start enjoying their experience. Essential topics to discuss with your students:

1. Daily Schedule: meal times, class times, lights out, rec time, canteen, night program.
2. McDowell Classes: activities you have chosen, what to wear, level & type of physical activity.
3. Their responsibilities: your school's guidelines, McDowell policies (listed below), expected behavior and consequences.
4. McDowell's location and travel time. Find us on a map of Alabama!
5. Cabins: size, chaperones, cabin assignments.
6. Their questions, fears and/or concerns.
7. **Rules for students at McDowell Environmental Center:**
  - Always ask a chaperone if you leave the group. Take a buddy with you. Tell the chaperone when you return.
  - Please help keep camp free of litter and graffiti.
  - MEC staff must approve the collection of any plants, animals, and other natural things.
  - Please don't chew gum at camp. Animals cannot digest gum that they find on the ground.
  - The challenge course and any construction areas are off limits.
  - Walk, don't run- there are many roots and rocks to trip over.
  - Everyone must wear close toed shoes and socks at all times
  - "If you can't say something nice...Don't say nothin' at all." -*Thumper*, from *Bambi*
  - Playgrounds and the Rec Hall may only be used with adult supervision.
  - Do not ring the bell in front of the dining hall- It is for emergencies only!

## **Helpful Hints for Choosing Chaperones**

- Make sure they will be a positive role model for the group. We want them to set a good example to the students in terms of their own values, behavior, appearance and attitude.
- Chaperones need to be physically fit. The classes at McDowell Environmental Center are very active. Most of them require some degree of hiking and hill climbing. Hikes vary from 1/4 mile to 3 miles, depending on the classes you choose.
- The chaperones must be able to keep up with the students. Some chaperones may see this as a vacation or as time to spend alone with their child. In reality, it will be a lot of work. They will be with the students all day and all night. Sometimes they might be the only chaperone supervising a group of students.
- Make sure they are committed to being on the trip for all of the students and to taking an active role in supervision. Taking care of one's own child is different from supervising a whole group. Different skills are required. Having some adults with previous experience could be helpful. Examples: scout troops, youth groups, etc.
- Our classes are held outdoors rain or shine. We encourage getting wet and muddy. If the chaperone is not enthusiastic about being outside, they will lessen the students' experience.
- You may limit chaperones to one or two per cabin. We also recommend no more than two adults per Field Group. We have found that too many chaperones detract from the experience for the children. In this case, sometimes the main emphasis shifts away from supervising the students to socializing with other chaperones. We have found that some students are distracted by their own parents and are more likely to participate when their parents are not immediately present. Too many chaperones can lead to the "someone else is watching them" syndrome, which means that no one is supervising the students!
- Consider asking parents to complete an application if they are interested in being a chaperone. This can help you make a well-informed decision about who to choose.



# HEALTH/RELEASE FORMS COVER SHEET

PLEASE MAIL ALL STUDENT HEALTH AND RELEASE FORMS TO McDOWELL  
2-3 WEEK PRIOR AND BRING ANY LAST FORMS

McDowell Environmental Center staff is not able to verify prior to class that all students attending Environmental Center Day Programs have a Health and Release Form that is signed and dated by the student's parent or legal guardian. We therefore request the Lead Teacher to sign below to verify that all students who participate in today's activities have completed the Health and Release Form (pg. 17) that is signed and dated by that student's parent or legal guardian.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, verify that all students who participate in  
(Print Your Name)

McDowell Activities on \_\_\_\_\_ have a completed and signed Health and Release Form that is  
(trip date)  
signed and dated by their parents or legal guardian.

List below any students who DO NOT have a signed Health and Release Forms or are NOT to participate:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

This form **MUST** be signed and accompany all student's health and release forms.  
All students must have a completed and signed form before they participate.

Signature of Lead Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

# Directions to Camp McDowell

## **Birmingham and Montgomery:**

Take I-65 North in Birmingham. Get off at exit 265A, headed onto I-22 towards Memphis. Take Exit 63 and turn right onto 269 North into Jasper. Turn right at the second light onto 18th St. and an immediate left onto 9th Ave. which will turn into HWY 195. Take Highway 195 North 13 miles to Camp McDowell. Camp entrance will be on your right.

## **From Huntsville:**

Take I-65 South to Cullman; take U.S. 278 west to Double Springs; take Highway 195 South 10 miles to Camp McDowell. Camp entrance will be on your left.

## **From Tuscaloosa:**

Take Highway 69 north to Jasper; take Highway 195 north 13 miles to Camp McDowell. Camp entrance will be on your right.

## **From the Shoals:**

Take Highway 43 south from Florence to Russellville; take 243 from Russellville until that road ends then take 195 south to Double Springs; take Highway 195 South 10 miles to Camp McDowell. Camp entrance will be on your left.

## **From the Tupelo, MS area:**

Take I-22 to the Hamilton/Highway 278 exit. Follow highway 278 about 40 miles to Double Springs. Turn right on Highway 195 South. Take HWY 195 South 10 miles to Camp McDowell. Camp entrance will be on your left.

**Please come to the Welcome Center, the second building on the left side  
of  
the camp road (about 1 mile from Highway 195).**