



Outdoor Education Field Trips – FAQ's

General Questions:

I. What types of Field Trips are available?

We offer a wide variety of Outdoor Education Topics and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Topics available for Kinder-4th graders. Visit scparks.com or click on [this link](#) for a list of available topics.

II. What is the difference between an Outdoor Education Topic and an NGSS Topic?

Outdoor Education Topics are currently not aligned with NGSS standards. NGSS Topics are standards-aligned, and we provide you with pre- and post-field trip lessons. When you fill out the Field Trip Interest Form, please select only one (1) topic for an NGSS Half Day field trip or two (2) topics for an NGSS Full Day field trip. If you want a field trip of Outdoor Education Topics, please select two (2) topics for a Half Day field trip or four (4) topics for a Full Day field trip.

III. How do I schedule a field trip?

Field Trips can be booked online, over the phone, or in person. Reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis. Minors (under 18) are not eligible to reserve field trips.

Online, please complete and submit Field Trip Interest Form to rec@scparks.com.

Over the phone, please contact us at (831) 454-7941.

In person, please complete the [Field Trip Interest Form](#) and stop by the County of Santa Cruz Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services at Simpkins Family Swim Center (2nd floor), 979 17th Ave, Santa Cruz, CA, 95062

IV. Reservation time & cost?

Santa Cruz County Parks Outdoor Education field trips may be reserved Monday-Friday between 9am to 3pm. The times of the reservation permit does not include a set-up and clean-up time should you decide to use the grounds before or after the field trip.

i. Field Trip Times:

1. Monday-Friday
2. Half Day hours:
 - a. 2 hours for K-1st grade
 - b. 2.5 hours for 2nd-4th grade
 - c. Fee: \$95.00
 - d. Per classroom, up to 32 students
3. Full Day hours:
 - a. 4 hours for K-1st grade
 - b. 5 hours for 2nd-4th grade
 - c. Fee: \$150.00
 - d. Per classroom, up to 32 students

We do not offer field trips on weekends and holidays at this time.

V. **What is included in my field trip?**

Santa Cruz County staff will engage your students with experiential and interactive games and activities, the vast majority outdoors, with all materials (pencils, paper, equipment) provided. Every half day field trip includes a 15-minute snack/water/free time break; full day field trips include this plus a lunch break. Every student will take home their own Field Trip Nature Journal and a passion for nature to last a lifetime! For those signed up for the Next Generation Science Standards aligned Field Trips currently offered at Quail Hollow Ranch, pre- and post-field trip lessons with supporting materials will be provided electronically.

VI. **What is NOT included in my field trip?**

Participants should bring their own lunch, snack(s), water bottle, appropriate clothing for the weather (be prepared to get a little dirty!), their own transportation to and from the field trip. The Quail Hollow Ranch parking lot CAN accommodate a typical-sized yellow school bus; the Quail Hollow Ranch parking lot CANNOT accommodate a larger-sized luxury bus.

VII. **Once I turn in a completed Field Trip Interest Form, what is the next step?**

Your application will be sent to the appropriate staff member who will contact you regarding the status of your Field Trip Interest Form. If there are no scheduling conflicts with any of your desired field trip dates, the Department will reserve the field trip and contact the Permittee for the next steps. If there are conflicts with all proposed field trip dates, the Department will reach out to the Permittee for alternative dates/times.

You will also need to create an account for yourself on scparcs.com.

VIII. **How do I create an account?**

- Click on this link: [Create account | Santa Cruz County Parks](#)
- Enter your email address, click **Next**.
- Enter your personal information on the next two pages.
- Click the green Create Account button at the bottom of the page.
- Go to your email inbox and open the email from SantaCruzCountyParks@active.com
- Open the email and click **Activate Now** to confirm your account.
- Your account should now be active!

IX. **Do I have to sign an agreement?**

Yes, once the Department has reserved your field trip, the Department will provide an Outdoor Education – Field Trip Terms and Conditions of Use agreement. This is to ensure that the Department and the Permittee/field trip attendees agree with the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both parties. The Permittee will need to sign the agreement (electronically through DocuSign, or on paper) at least two (2) weeks prior to the field trip. Signed paper agreements can be submitted in person or mailed to Santa Cruz County Parks, 979 17th Ave (2nd floor), Santa Cruz, CA, 95062.

X. **How do I pay?**

Once your reservation is in our system, the Department will send you a permit via email. Payment can be made by mail, over the phone, or in person by credit card or check and will need to be processed at least two (2) weeks prior to the field trip. Credit cards are charged by ACT*SCCountyParks. There is a \$40 service charge for returned checks and credit card charge backs. Activities, dates, and fees are subject to change.

Mail a check to:

Santa Cruz County Parks
Attn: Outdoor Education
979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Please include the field trip permit(s).

Over the phone, please contact us at (831) 454-7941.

In person, stop by the County of Santa Cruz Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services at Simpkins Family Swim Center (2nd floor), 979 17th Ave, Santa Cruz, Monday to Friday 9am-4pm.

XI. Does the SC County Parks Department offer a scholarship program to cover the cost of the field trip?

Unfortunately, not at this time. However, we have a partnership with **Santa Cruz County Parks Friends** who offer Access Grants scholarships. Please click here to learn more [Access Grant Scholarships - County Park Friends](#)

Other Questions:

I. How many adult chaperones do I need?

For field trips, our adult to student ratio is 1:12. Department staff will **not** be counted in the ratio. So, if the Permittee has 24 students attending, the Permittee will need **at least two (2)** adult chaperones present for the entire duration of the field trip. If the Permittee has 25 students attending, the Permittee will need **at least three (3)** adult chaperones present for the entire duration of the field trip.

II. What about field trip permission slips?

If the school requires field trip permission forms, the Permittee is required to collect and retain them for their own records. The Department will **not** need originals or copies of the signed permission slips; the Department only requires the signed Outdoor Education – Field Trip Terms and Conditions agreement.

III. Do I need to be present?

Yes, the Permittee, or the group or entity individual named in the Permit, must be present during the entire period of the field trip.

IV. What are your cancellation policies?

Cancellation Fee: 50% of the reservation charge will be applied if cancelled two (2) weeks prior to the date. Cancellations of less than two weeks receive no refund of fees.

V. What do I need to do in the event I need to change the field trip date?

Date change Fee: \$25.00. Changes to the reservation, including a change of date, must be requested in writing by the permittee. All changes are subject to Department approval and subject to a change fee. No changes or additions to the reservation times may take place within two (2) weeks of the event date. Refunds are not given for inclement weather.

VI. What if it's raining on the day of my field trip?

Field trips will continue rain or shine. We will utilize indoor spaces and ask that all participants bring weather-appropriate outdoor gear (rain jackets, waterproof boots, layers). The rain also makes for a fun and unique trip – more opportunities to find newts and banana slugs!

VII. What about extreme weather?

Contact the Department to explore alternative date(s). Extreme weather is defined as an event that is rare at a particular place and time of year that poses risks to life, property or requires intervention of authorities.

VIII. What if I am sick and cannot attend the field trip? Can I use a sub?

If you are unable to attend your scheduled field trip, it is your responsibility to notify the Department prior to the field trip and arrange for a substitute adult chaperone to take your place.

IX. What if a child attends my field trip but he/she/they/it is not on my class roster?

Only participants in your class / group should be attending the field trip. Children of adult chaperones (as well as your own) should not attend the field trip. This ensures that the Permittee, and the County, comply with the Outdoor Education – Field Trip Terms and Conditions of Use agreement.

X. How can I help keep Santa Cruz County Parks beautiful?

Please leave the buildings and grounds free of trash and other debris from your field trip.

"Live Here, Work Here, Play Here"