



## Teacher Ranger Teacher Program

A National Park Service Professional Development Opportunity

### Program Summary

The National Park Service (NPS) Teacher Ranger Teacher (TRT) program is an extended **professional development** program for K-12 educators. The purpose of the program is to provide teachers an opportunity to learn about NPS educational resources and themes while earning continuing education graduate credits through a partnership between the NPS and the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver). Teachers will spend several weeks in an immersive, on-site experience at Guadalupe Mountains National Park or local NPS program office producing a major project of NPS-based educational materials or programs and complete three graduate credit hours of coursework in Experiential Learning online. The program offers teachers a unique opportunity to enhance their teaching skills in Science, Technology, Math, and Engineering (STEM) or history and civics fields through working directly with NPS scientific data and primary resources. Both the NPS major project and on-site experience as well as the CU Denver online course are required for the participants to successfully complete the program.

The emphasis of the program is to engage teachers from schools with underserved student populations, especially schools in rural and urban areas and from tribal schools. The intended impact of the program is to reach out to underserved students by providing a professional development opportunity to their teachers.

**Park Name:** Guadalupe Mountains National Park  
**Mailing Address:** 400 Pine Canyon Drive – Salt Flat, TX 79847  
**Park Contact:** Elizabeth Jackson, Chief of Interpretation & Education  
**Park Contact Email Address:** Elizabeth\_Jackson@nps.gov  
**Park Phone Number:** (915) 828-3251

**Projected Dates of Detail:** June-July 2018

**Housing Availability:** Housing in park dormitory may be available at Guadalupe Mountains National Park; teacher may be required to share room with an intern, seasonal or volunteer. Possible dormitory space has full kitchen, living room, and bathroom.

**Stipend:** Program participants will receive a \$3000 stipend to help cover travel costs or living expenses while participating in the program. The stipend will be distributed at the end of the summer once the TRT has completed all components of the program and graduate course requirements

**Program Hourly Requirements:** Successful completion of the TRT program will equal approximately **240** hours of effort. The actual number of days or weeks that the teacher spends at Guadalupe Mountains National Park or a local NPS program office can be negotiated at the park or program office level as long as the program requirements can be met by the end of the teacher's experience. TRTs are expected to spend approximately one to two hours each day in online course work.

### 240 hours of total effort

- 160 hours of major educational project and lesson plan (project and lesson plan will be based on NPS resources and will be included in online course requirements)- 65%
- 45 hours online coursework- 20%
- 35 hours other NPS operations experience- 15%

### Program Administration

The TRT program is administered through a Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) agreement with the University of Colorado Denver. While participating in the program, teachers are considered "student interns" of the university and not employees of NPS nor CU Denver. **Stipends** provided to teachers are administered through CU Denver upon their successful completion of both the NPS and CU Denver program requirements. CU Denver will also provide participants IRS tax statements. Participants are responsible for any applicable taxes on the stipend as income. Teacher participants are not covered by worker's compensation under NPS or CU Denver.

### Training

All TRTs and park or program office coordinators are required to attend an orientation webinar that outlines the program and lesson plan requirements. The 2018 webinar will be presented twice; dates to be determined. (In 2017, webinars were presented in June and July.)

### Lesson Plan

The TRT will complete at least **one** lesson plan to use in the classroom or as an on-site activity in Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Lesson plans will be based on NPS resources including scientific data, primary source documents, or NPS produced materials. Lesson plans produced will be included in the online course requirements.

### **Online Graduate Course**

All teachers participating in the TRT program are required to register and complete the online course in Experiential Learning with CU Denver. Tuition for all teachers in the program will be covered by the Washington office of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers with funding provided by the National Park Foundation. All graduate course readings, discussion forums and assignments must be fulfilled for the TRT to successfully complete the program and receive the full stipend offered at the end of the program. Following completion of the required course, TRTs may choose to continue their studies with CU Denver online and earn up to six additional graduate credit hours at their own expense resulting in a nine-credit hour graduate certificate in place-based education with CU Denver.

### **Background Check**

Guadalupe Mountains National Park may require the TRT to operate government owned vehicles, have unsupervised access to non-public spaces on the park, or have access to DOI network computers, so Guadalupe Mountains National Park will obtain a background check for the teacher. Guadalupe Mountains National Park will cover the cost of the background check.

### **TRT Apparel**

Guadalupe Mountains National Park will provide two TRT program shirts and one TRT logo hats for program participants to wear while on duty.

### **Major Education Project**

TRTs will produce a major education project or program as part of the requirements for both the NPS and CU Denver components of the program. The major project should equal approximately 160 hours of effort by the TRT. A list of suggested TRT projects is listed below.

- Junior Ranger activities/program development
- Every Kid in a Park activities for 4<sup>th</sup> graders
- Summer camp activities
- Educational podcasts
- Teacher professional development
- Family programs
- Outreach to students at schools connected to military bases
- Outreach to military families
- Healthy People/Healthy Parks projects
- Review of park education materials
- Common Core State Standards projects
- Applied STEM education materials and activities
- National Writing Project/writing labs activities
- National History Day projects
- Working with Bureau of Indian Education schools
- English Language Learner projects/activities
- Applying/incorporating the arts into NPS education programs
- Applying/incorporating interdisciplinary approaches to NPS education programs
- Creating online connections to students
- Incorporating technology-based projects into NPS education programs
- Teacher developed webinars
- Networking with local schools and districts
- Applications for primary source content/availability
- Service learning project identification and organization
- Working with organized groups such as scouts, boys & girls clubs, after school or summer camp programs
- Earth caching
- Liaison with cultural and natural resource divisions for education projects

### **Additional Information:**

The anticipated educational program will engage local public land agencies – US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, New Mexico State Parks, National Cave and Karst Research Institute – and educational entities – Carlsbad Municipal Schools, New Mexico State University-Carlsbad. TRT will have the opportunity to work with Guadalupe Mountains National Park staff and volunteers as well as complete independent projects consistent with and contributing to the understanding and enjoyment of the park's fundamental resources and values:

- Geology
- Paleontology
- Scenic Values
- Wilderness Values
- Chihuahuan Desert
- Sky Island Ecosystem

## ABOUT GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK:

Guadalupe Mountains National Park was authorized by an act of Congress to preserve “an area possessing outstanding geological values together with scenic and other natural values of great significance.” The park was formally established in 1972 with an area of 76,293 acres; in 1978, 46,850 acres of the park’s high country were designated as wilderness by Congress.

Today, Guadalupe Mountains National Park includes 86,416 acres in west Texas, just south of the New Mexico state line and north of U.S. Highway 62/180. The Guadalupe Mountains rise more than 3,000 feet above the arid Chihuahuan Desert that surrounds them. El Capitan, the park’s most striking feature, is a 1,000-foot-high limestone cliff. Nearby Guadalupe Peak, 8,751 feet above sea level, is the highest point in Texas.

The national park is open year-round; the headquarters and main visitor center at Pine Springs, located on Highway 62/180 about 55 miles southwest of Carlsbad, NM and 110 miles east of El Paso, TX. The visitor center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mountain (Standard or Daylight) Time; park information, backcountry permits, maps and potable water can be obtained at the visitor center. The mailing address is 400 Pine Canyon Drive, Salt Flat, TX 79847 and the phone is (915) 828-3251.

Guadalupe Mountains National Park is located in a very sparsely populated area with limited accommodations and facilities. Gas for vehicles is available at occasional service stations on U.S. Highway 62/180 - 35 miles west at the Dell City, TX junction and 34 miles northeast at White's City, NM. White's City has a small grocery store, a laundromat, a private campground and motel. Complete accommodations and facilities are available in Carlsbad, NM and in Van Horn, TX, 60 miles south of the national park.

## Teacher Ranger Teacher Program Application

Applicant Name:

Home Address:

Home/Cell Phone:

Email Address:

Applicant’s School Name:

School District/State:

School Address:

School Phone:

Grade level and subject(s) taught:

1. Do you teach at a Title I school? (please circle) No Yes

If yes, what percentage of your students qualify for Free and Reduced-Price Lunches?

2. Can you commit to approximately 4-6 weeks of time (230-240 hours) during the summer season (May-August, depending on park needs)? (please circle) No Yes

3. Describe your most effective unit or lesson plan that actively engaged students in learning. Why was it successful?

4. Why do you want to participate in Teacher Ranger Teacher?

5. How will you use your TRT experience to enrich your classroom teaching and create opportunities for your students to connect to the National Park system?

6. How will you share information and skills acquired through this experience with your school and district colleagues?

7. Describe your familiarity and experiences with local, state or national parks.

Please provide information for two professional references:

Reference 1:

Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Relationship to applicant:

Reference 2:

Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Relationship to applicant:

Applications may be mailed or hand-delivered to 400 Pine Canyon Drive, Salt Flat, TX or emailed to [elizabeth\\_jackson@nps.gov](mailto:elizabeth_jackson@nps.gov). Applications must be received no later than Monday, May 7, 2018.