Joshua Tree Field Trips

National Park Service

U.S Department of Interior

Joshua Tree National Park

Education Office

*\*Field Trips use park resources to enrich national and California science and social studies standards\**

**Life Science**

***Suggested******Standards*** *\*Field Trips are approximately 3 hours long. Park locations vary depending on program and school\**

***Grade*** *(NGSS/CA Soc. Sc.)*

preK, K-LS1-1 **Who Lives in a National Park?**- Location- *Black Rock Nature Center*

K, Through games, activities, and short hikes, students will explore the plants and animals living in

the desert and how they make the desert home.

1, 2, 3 1-LS1-1, **Exploring a Desert Habitat**- Location- *Black Rock Nature Center or Cottonwood Visitor Center*

2-LS4-1 Students will investigate the diversity of desert life and learn about special plant and animal adaptations through games and a moderate hike.

High School \**High school programs provide practical experience using the tools of Joshua Tree National Park scientists\**

**Discovering the Ancients**- Locations- *Throughout the park. Education staff will assist with best locations.*

Students will visit scientific plots selected for long-term data collection where they will ID and age certain plant species in Joshua Tree. Data collected will be entered into a database available to park scientists. It is strongly recommended that the Guest Speaker pre-visit program, Discovering the Ancients, also be scheduled to prepare students for the field trip.

**Tune into Tracking**- Location- *Cap Rock*. Students will be provided the opportunity to learn how the threatened desert tortoise thrives and how park scientists keep track of the population. Students will track and take measurements of “tortoises” in the wild (no live animals will be used.)

**Issues in Park Management**- Locations- *Throughout the park. Education staff will assist with best locations.*

Surrounded by millions of people in a highly populated part of the country, the park faces many issues when trying to fulfill its mission to preserve and protect natural and cultural resources for all in perpetuity. Students will be guided through areas experiencing the effects of change and explore reasons why they think these issues exist and how the park should react. Teachers can select topics from the following list of current issues: graffiti, climate change, impacts of increased visitation, or the teacher can work with staff on current issues pertinent to the classroom.

**Earth Science/Geology**

1, 2 2-ESS1-1, **Junior GeoKids**- Location- *Black Rock Nature Center*

2-ESS2-2 Students will see the effects of slow and fast change on the Joshua Tree geological landscape. They will also experience how the diversity of desert life survives in that landscape through games, activities, and a moderate hike.

4, 5 4-ESS2-1, **GeoKids**- Location- *Hidden Valley*

4-ESS2-2, Students will experience how erosion alters the landscape at Joshua Tree. They will explore geological

5-ESS2-1 features, up close and personal, and hear stories of how humans have interacted with that geology for thousands of years. After a guided hike, rangers will lead students on a fun scramble through the rocks.

**Human/Cultural History**

3,4 CA SS Standard 3.2, **Keys to the Past**- Location- *Keys Ranch (program is limited to 1 class per visit)*

4.2-3 Bill Keys arrived in Joshua Tree looking for gold but stayed for 60 years. With his wife, Francis, they raised a large family and maintained several side ventures on their rugged Desert Queen Ranch. Students will explore the ranch, learning about the wit and ingenuity needed to survive in the remote and harsh location of the Mojave Desert.