

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Prince William Forest Park
Triangle, VA
www.nps.gov/prwi



Prince William Forest Park

An Educator's Guide

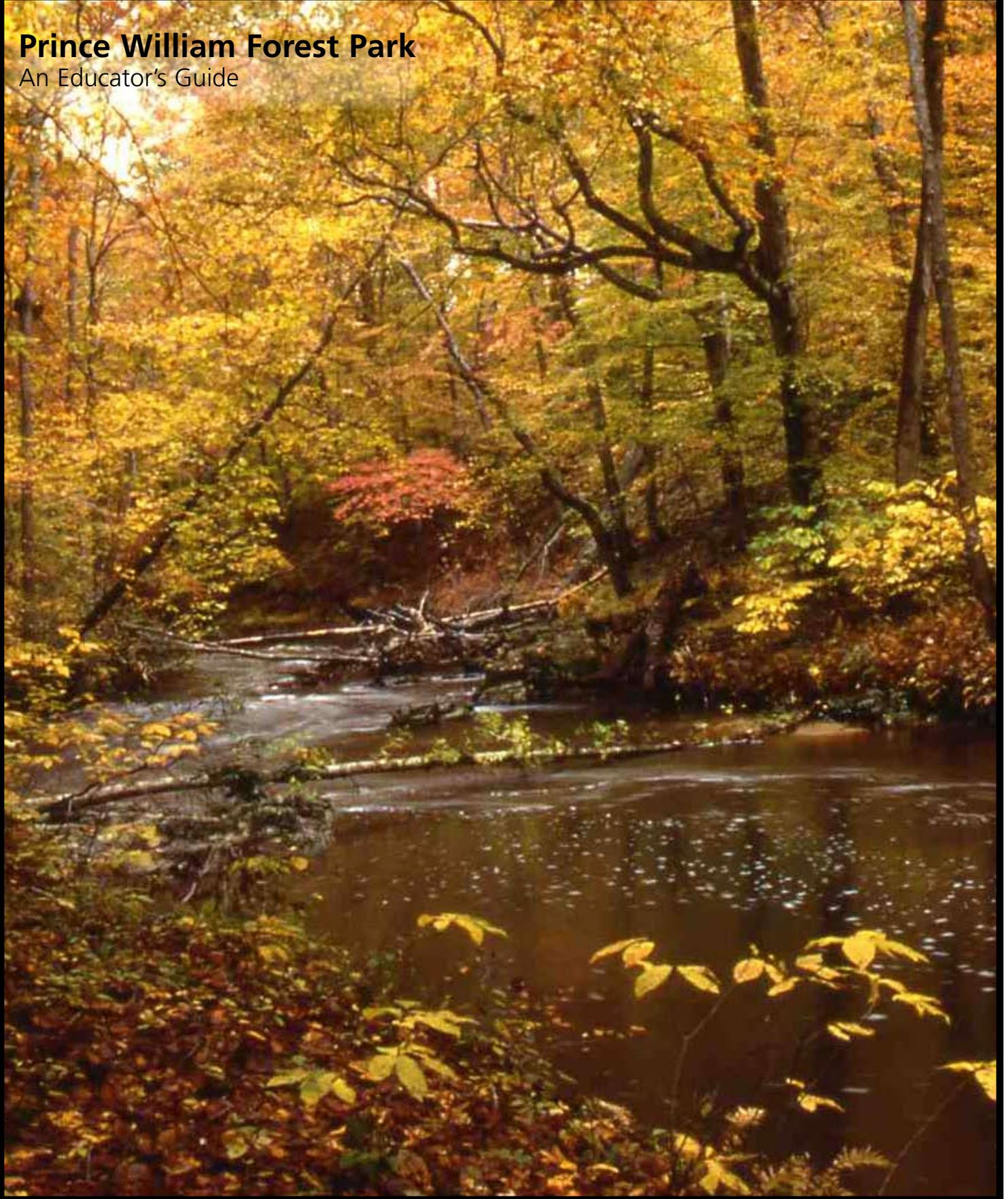


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

About Prince William Forest Park

Park Facilities

Day Facilities

Overnight Facilities

Contact Information

Plan Your Visit

Directions to the Park

Park Map

How to Schedule an Education Program

How to Apply for an Entrance Fee Waiver

The Importance of Pre and Post Visit Activities

Preparing for Your Ranger-Led Program

Preparing for Your Self-Guided Program

A Note About Resource Protection

Additional Safety Messages

Areas for Collaboration & Partnership

Graphic Design/Information Technology

Volunteerism

History

Additional Resources

Special Program Request Form

INTRODUCTION

Today, across our land, the National Park System represents America at its best. Each park contributes to a deeper understanding of the history of the United States and our way of life; of the natural processes which have given form to our land, and to the enrichment of the environment in which we live.

-George B. Hartzog, Jr., NPS Director, 1964-1972

About Prince William Forest Park

Prince William Forest Park has been providing recreation and respite for people, and habitat for plants and animals since its founding in the 1930s. Originally named Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area, Prince William Forest Park was an escape from the city for children and families of the Washington, DC area during the great depression. Over two hundred rustic buildings, arranged into cabin camps, housed these children and their families during summer 'nature' camps. Over 150 of those cabins still stand today within the 15,000 acres of forest-covered park, now the largest protected natural area in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

The park protects the largest example of eastern piedmont forest in the National Park System. Here you will find northern species such as Hemlock along with southern species such as Poplar and Virginia Pine. The park also protects a large portion of the Quantico Creek and its watershed. Scientists have used the Quantico Creek as a benchmark in water quality for the area.

For those interested in history, Prince William Forest Park also protects and interprets a history that stretches from Native Americans and Early Colonial Life to the Great Depression and World War II. Franklin Roosevelt's "Tree Army", the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), constructed buildings, roads and lakes here during the 1930's, including the 5 historic cabin camps. From 1942 to 1945, the United States Office of Strategic Services, forerunner to the CIA, used this land exclusively for the training of spies and radio operators. Since World War II, generations of Americans have spent their first night camping under the stars here at Prince William Forest Park.

Today, groups visiting Prince William Forest Park can use its 37 miles of hiking trails and 21 miles of bicycle-accessible roads and trails to experience this unique natural area and learn about the native Virginia plants and animals. Overnight trips can further student connections to this national treasure through group tent and cabin camping.

Park Facilities:

Day Programs

TREC- The Turkey Run Education Center (30 students)

The Turkey Run Education Center and Prince William Forest Park Visitor Center are our most frequently used locations for daytime educational programs. Turkey Run Education Center (TREC) is a full size classroom with laboratory capabilities. It holds approximately 30 students and their teachers and be used for both ranger-led and self-guided programs. Great for wintertime educational activities, TREC activities often include working with orienteering, TV/VCR use or arts & crafts. Contact: 703-221-7181.

Please note that self-guided use of the TREC classroom requires a fee of \$75.00 per day of use.

Prince William Forest Park Visitor Center (30 students)

The Prince William Forest Park Visitor Center is a great place to start your visit to the park. Its exhibits house museum artifacts from the park's history and include hands-on activities for kids of all ages. The visitor center also houses a 30 person classroom with row seating, a large screen television with VCR and the availability of slide presentations. The park orientation video can be viewed here at any time, free of charge and is a great introduction to the park for your students. Contact: 703-221-7181.

Overnight Programs

If you are coming from a long-distance or just want to give your students an opportunity to sleep out under the stars, group cabin and tent camping are available at Prince William Forest Park.

Cabin Camps (70-200 students)

Prince William Forest Park houses 5 different historic cabin camps built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s and 1940s. In the early days of public recreation, the park's cabin camps were a model for national, state and local park facilities around the country. The cabin camps come equipped with electricity, running water and toilets, amphitheaters with fire pits, modern kitchens and mess halls. For more information on rates and facilities, please visit our web site at www.nps.gov/prwi or call 703-221-5843. (Day use of the cabins is available at the cost of \$125.00 per day). Contact: 703-221-5843.

Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground (25-40 students per site)

Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground has 6 six group camp sites. Three of these sites can hold up to 25 campers. Three more sites can hold up to 40 campers. Each site has a fire pit and picnic tables and the campground has centralized restrooms. An amphitheater is also available, free of charge to groups using the Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground. The amphitheatre includes benches and a large bonfire pit. The Turkey Run Ridge Group Campground is located adjacent to the Turkey Run Education Center Classroom. Visit our web site at www.nps.gov/prwi or contact 703-221-7181.



PLAN YOUR VISIT

Directions

From Points North (Washington, D.C.)

Take I-95 south to exit 150-B to Joplin Road (619 west). The park entrance is the second right. Approximate driving time from Washington, DC - 45 minutes (1.5 hours if approaching afternoon rush hour (4:00-6:00)).

From Points South (Stafford Co., Fredericksburg)

Take I-95 to exit 150-B to Joplin Road (619 west). The park entrance is the second right. Approximate driving time from Fredericksburg, VA - 30 minutes (45 mins-1 hour if approaching morning rush hour 8:00-10:00).

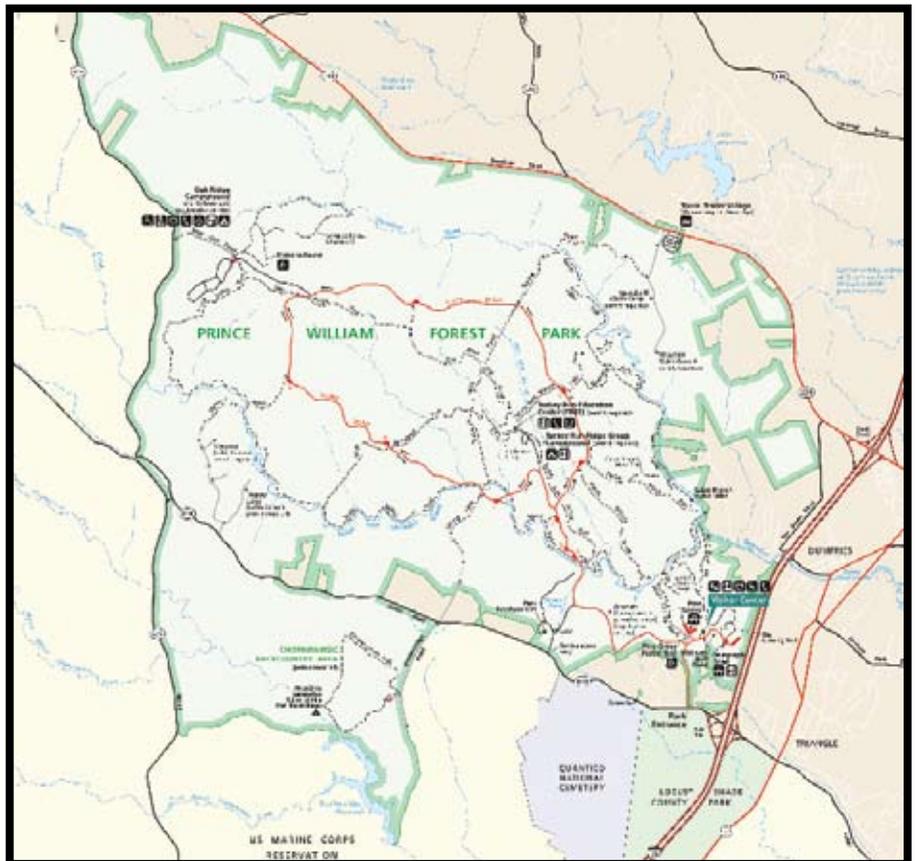
From Points West (Manassas)

Travel East on Route 234 for approximately 18 miles from Manassas, VA to Interstate 95. Head South on I-95 for one exit to Exit 150B (VA 619 West). The park entrance is the second right. Approximate drive time from Manassas, VA - 30 minutes (45-minutes if approaching rush hour 8:00-10:00 am.)

A Note About Traffic

Please note that the entrance to Prince William Forest Park accessible only off of Route 619 - Joplin Road. This leaves the park subject to both morning and evening rush hour traffic problems. Please allow for rush hour traffic when planning your visit as Rangers may not be able to extend your program to accommodate a late arrival.

Park Map



How to Schedule an Education Program

To schedule an educational program at Prince William Forest Park please visit our park website and click on the “For Teachers” link. Then read our list of currently offered programs and print out the “Ranger Program Request” form. Then, fax, e-mail or mail the “Ranger Program Request” form, along with their necessary documentation to Prince William Forest Park within 60 days of your requested program date.

Within two weeks of receiving your special program request, you will receive notification as to whether your request has been accommodated. If the National Park Service can provide a program for you and your students, you will receive an Education Program Confirmation Form in the mail or by e-mail. Upon receipt of your Education Program Confirmation, if you have any questions or conflicts please feel free to contact the Park Ranger listed on your form.

Ranger Availability

Not all Special Program Requests can be honored. If you receive a letter stating that a park ranger is not available for your requested program, please do not hesitate to re-apply for other dates or visit the site for one of our many self-guided activities. Flexibility in dates and times, as well as in program topics, will greatly increase your probability of obtaining a ranger-guided program.

How to Apply for an Entrance Fee Waiver

Prince William Forest Park has an entrance fee for each vehicle entering the park. This entrance fee can be waived if your group is accredited by an educational or scientific institution. Recreational visits (i.e. orienteering, hiking) are not covered by the waiver.

To receive an entrance fee waiver, please complete the following steps:

1. At least two weeks in advance of your visit, draft a letter requesting a waiver of the park entrance fee that:
 - a. provides documentation of official recognition of your group as an educational institution by a federal, state or local government entity responsible for education or accreditation. Using official letterhead or attaching a copy of an accreditation letter is generally considered sufficient documentation.
 - b. states directly and specifically the purpose of your group’s visit to Prince William Forest Park. The visit must relate directly to the resources of the park. The group must state specifically what they will study in the park and show how studying these park resources is part of their school curriculum. Lesson plans and course descriptions are useful in addressing these items.

2. Send this letter along with any additional information to
Education Program Coordinator
Prince William Forest Park
18100 Park Headquarters Road
Triangle VA 22172

Entrance fee waiver requests may also be faxed to the Education Program Coordinator’s attention at 703-221-3258. If you have further questions about entrance fees and fee waivers, please call the Education Program Coordinator at 703-221-7181.

The Importance of Pre and Post-site Activities

We highly suggest that you conduct any pre/post-site activities as instructed by your assigned Park Ranger. Prince William Forest Park educational programs will be designed to be successful only in conjunction with the completion of pre/post-site activities. As you browse this informational booklet, program descriptions will include an elaboration on any pre/post activities that are necessary for the success of the program.

Preparing for Your Ranger-Guided Program

For Ranger-led activities, please note the following:

- Ranger activities at Prince William Forest Park take place rain or shine. Please ensure that your group is dressed for changes in weather.
- Unless separated into small groups by the Park Ranger, students must stay together as a group.
- Rangers will rely upon class instructors and chaperones to provide discipline and control as needed. There must be one adult chaperone for every 10 children. If you are unable to meet this guideline, please contact the Education Coordinator before your visit.
- Students will not be allowed to join a Ranger-led hike without closed-toe shoes.
- It is essential that students bring their own drinking water on any Ranger-led hikes over 1 hour in length. Drink machines are available at the visitor center in an emergency. There are no food machines within the park.

Preparing for Your Self-Guided Program

For self-guided activities, please note the following:

- Please bring a well-stocked First-Aid kit with you.
- Cellular phones do not work in all areas of the park. Please bring your cellular phone with you on your visit. However, in case your cellular phone does not work please take the following precautions:
 - o Always check-in to the park's visitor center upon your arrival. Let them know how many are in your group, where you are going in the park and when you should return.
 - o Inform someone from your educational institution of your visit to Prince William Forest Park and instruct them as to what time you expect to return. Give them the park's Emergency Dispatch telephone number to call in case you do not return within a reasonable time -1-866-677-6677.
- Any emergencies while conducting a self-guided program should be reported immediately to the National Park Service Emergency Dispatch at 1-866-677-6677 or to 911.
- If you are truly lost, keep all members of your group together. Sit down, relax and wait for someone to contact you.
- Students should be prepared for their time in Prince William Forest Park. Measures include:
 - o Dressing for weather changes
 - o Bringing their own drinking water and snacks
 - o Bringing insect repellent with them.
 - o Bringing with them any medical necessities (medications etc..)

A Note About Resource Protection

As a unit of the National Park Service, Prince William Forest Park protects natural and historic resources that belong to all generations of Americans. Any vandalism, graffiti or defacement of the resources within Prince William Forest Park will be prosecuted.

Additional Safety Notices

- Ticks are common in Prince William Forest Park. They are usually found in grassy and bushy areas in the Spring, Summer and Autumn. Stay on trail and ensure that students have their parents conduct a “tick check” on their clothes, hairline, ankle and foot area when they go home. Individuals attending the park should use insect or tick repellent as recommended by a medical professional.
- Poison Ivy is ever-present in Prince William Forest Park. It has shiny leaves in groups of three and grows either as a shrub or on a fuzzy vine. “Leaves of three, let it be” is good advice for students. Wash with soap and water after contact.
- Snakes are an essential part of the Prince William Forest Park ecosystem. Do not purposely approach any snakes within the park. If you encounter a snake on a trail, either go around it at a wide circumference or back-track. Snakes often rest on rocks to enjoy the sun, or hide in cool, damp places to stay cool. Please tell your groups not to reach under logs and rocks unless inspecting the area first.

Helpful Phone Numbers

Contact Information:

Interpretive or Educational Programs
Laura Cohen, Chief of Interpretation
Phone: 703-221-7181
E-mail: Laura_Cohen@nps.gov

Natural or Historical Resource Questions
David Hayes, Chief of Resource Stewardship and
Environmental Recreation
Phone: 703-221-3406
E-mail: David_Hayes@nps.gov

Group Cabin Camping
Megan McFadden, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Phone: 703-221-5843
E-mail: Megan_E_Mcfadden@nps.gov



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Prince William Forest Park
18100 Park Headquarters Rd.
Triangle, VA 22314
703-221-7181 (ph)
703-221-3258 (fax)
prwi_info@nps.gov (email)
www.nps.gov/prwi