



Hands on the Land

A National Network of Field Classrooms Linking Students, Teachers, and Parents to their Public Lands and Waterways

Featured Site

Rickenbaugh House

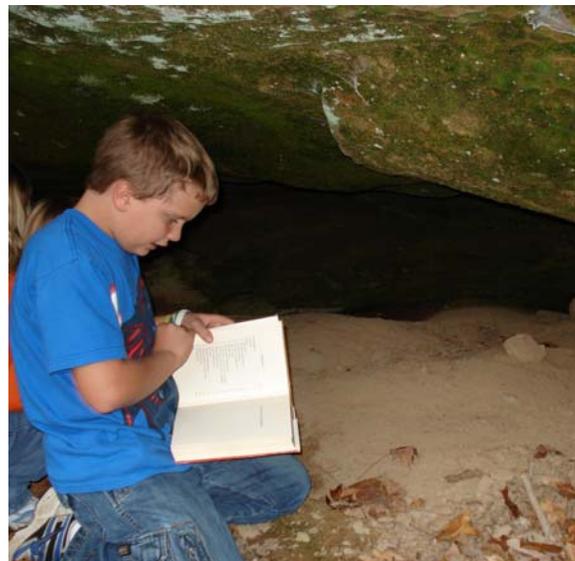
As part of the Hoosier National Forest in Indiana, the Rickenbaugh House offers visitors and students an inside look at life in the 1800s. With restoration completed in 2003, the House hosts area students to HOL events, National Public Lands Day projects, festivals and serves as a meeting place for local community groups. With its rich history and surrounding natural resources, the Rickenbaugh House is a unique Hands on the Land site.

In 1874, Jacob Rickenbaugh hired three Belgium stone masons to build a house constructed out of local sandstone and wood. After almost 100 years as a family home, post office and temporary church site, it was acquired by the Forest Service in 1968. Thanks to the efforts of the Celina Interpretive Association, the USFS and other grantees, the house was restored, thus preserving the local area's history for years to come.



Students learn about life at the Rickenbaugh house in the 1870's from local hunter and re-enactor Albert Hagedorn.

Utilizing the unique attributes of the Rickenbaugh House, Forest Service Partners have created programs that invite area students to take a step back in time. In 2006, over 100 students volunteered their services to help with the site's upkeep and learned from community volunteers and Rickenbaugh descendants about life in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Students learned about the animals and plants that live in the woods and enjoyed a wild edible feast. Others learned how to identify animal tracks and used that knowledge to create a learning game for other Rickenbaugh House visitors to enjoy.



Students identify animal tracks in the natural surroundings of the Rickenbaugh House.

As spring arrives, and the weather warms, the students work and learn outside. They will plant native flowers in front of the House, take nature walks to learn about tree identification and about the Native Americans who are said to have lived in the cliffs behind the house. Later this month they will be learning how to identify bird songs and participate in an annual bird count. Earth Day will bring lessons about the forest environment and a trail maintenance hike. A Hands on the Land after school group plans to take a boat ride on the lake to learn about the lake environment and boat safety from an Indiana conservation officer and several local fishermen. A 7th grade art class will create paintings of the Rickenbaugh House, Celina Lake and the nearby forest. Their artwork will be on display during a public open house in May that will also feature artifact displays created by another junior high class. Tours will also be conducted by students who will be sharing what they learned with area residents and other students.

To learn more, contact Nancy Myers at nmyers@fs.fed.us or visit the site profile on the HOL website, http://www.handsontheland.org/profiles/profile_details.cfm?sitecode=riho.

Member News

New HOL Sites

Please welcome two new sites to the Hands on the Land network: Table Rocks and McGregor Park.

Table Rocks

Two of the most prominent topographic features in Oregon's Rogue Valley are Upper and Lower Table Rocks. With its rich geological history and remarkable diversity, Table Rocks is a natural place for field studies. The Table Rocks Environmental Education program began over 20 years ago and marked the beginning of a partnership between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and The Nature Conservancy. Today, BLM environmental educators lead over 4,200 school children, teachers, parents, and other participating groups on guided, interpretive hikes to the summits of both rocks. For more information contact Site Manager, Leah Schrodtt at (541) 618 2468 or Leah_Schrodtt@or.blm.gov.

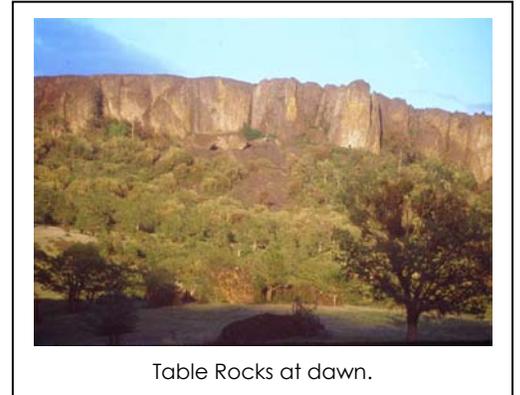


Table Rocks at dawn.



Eager students engaged in learning at McGregor Park.

McGregor Park

Located in Oregon along the Rogue-Umpqua National Scenic Byway, McGregor Park offers visitors an opportunity to witness salmon spawning, beaver activity, great blue herons, ospreys and bald eagles flying overhead. The environmental education program at McGregor Park leads school groups through hands-on, interactive, educational stations with activities and illustrative kits, interpretive hikes, and subject specific presentations. Topics include salmon lifecycle and the riparian zone, fire ecology, forest management, Native American history, botany, and wildlife. For more information contact Site Manager, Leah Schrodtt at (541) 618 2468 or Leah_Schrodtt@or.blm.gov.

Upcoming Events

National Environmental Education Week

April 15-22, 2007

National Environmental Education (EE) Week is the single largest organized environmental education event in U.S. history. It will increase the educational impact of Earth Day by creating a full week of educational preparation, learning, and activities in K-12 classrooms, nature centers, zoos, museums, and aquariums. National EE Week intends to reach 100,000 educators and 3 million students through 50 million hours of learning and 5,000 Earth Day service projects. It is coordinated by the National Environmental Education & Training Foundation (NEETF) in cooperation with hundreds of outstanding schools, environmental education organizations, education associations, state and federal agencies. Visit <http://www.eeweek.org/about.htm> to learn more and to become involved.

Take Pride in America 2007 National Awards

Take Pride in America is seeking nominations of individuals, companies or civic groups that have demonstrated a commitment to stewardship of America's public lands. Every year, Take Pride presents the National Awards to individuals and groups who have volunteered their time and talent to our federal, state, and local public lands and waterways. Nominations are due by the end of April for projects dating from June 2006 through April 2007. Winners will be chosen by a selection committee and invited to an awards ceremony in Washington, DC in July 2007. Visit www.TakePride.gov to complete the National Awards application form and for detailed information.

Corrections

In the March 2007 newsletter, the email contact information for the Petrified Forest National Park staff, Bill Parker, was listed incorrectly. His email is William_Parker@nps.gov.

Web Corner will return next month!