

Rio Grande Nature Center State Park – Group program request

Requests for group programs must be received at least *four weeks in advance* of the requested program date. Complete the form below and submit it via email (karen.herzenberg@emnrd.nm.gov -or- tanja.george@emnrd.nm.gov), fax (505-344-4505), or regular mail. One of the Park’s Instructional Coordinators will let you know that your request was received. *Your program is not confirmed until you receive an email with a date confirmation.*

1. Self-guided or guided? Select ONE of the three options.

If your group consists of more than one class, we recommend splitting up by class and doing a rotation through different locations or activities.

_____ **Self-guided visit**

Your group’s teacher or leader will bring the group on a self-guided exploration at the Park. When we have a date confirmed, we will send an email with ideas and resources on preparing for an educational and enjoyable self-guided visit.

_____ **Guided nature walk (1-1.5 hours for each group of 25 students)**

We will assign a volunteer or staff guide to lead your group on a walk through the bosque.

_____ **Guided pond exploration (1-1.5 hours for each group of 25 students)**

We will assign a volunteer or staff guide to lead your group’s exploration of pond life. We can only take one group at a time, so for 2 classes you’ll need 3 hours minimum and for 3 classes you’ll need 4.5 hours minimum. When classes are not at the pond, please refer to our suggestions for self-guided time.

2. When would you like your group to participate?

RGNCSP is a small park. We recommend that groups of under 30 plan on spending no more than 3 hours including a lunch break.

What date/day are you requesting? Date: _____ Day: (choose one) SU MO TU WE TH FR SA

Arrival time at Park: _____ Departure time: _____

3. Please indicate the number of participants in each age group.

Group size is limited. Schools may have up to 3 classes (“class” = 25 kids plus chaperones) visit at one time. There must be 1 adult for every 5 kids for Pre-K and K; for 1st-12th the ratio is 1 adult for every 7 kids.

Elementary School (K-5th): _____ Middle School (6th-8th): _____ High School (9th-12th)

Pre-school (Pre-K and younger) _____ Adults: _____

4. Tell us about your group.

Organization (name of school or group): _____

Organization phone number: _____ Organization fax number: _____

Contact Person (first and last name): _____

Contact’s email address: _____

Contact’s best phone #: _____ Alternate phone #: _____

Will the contact person be attending the requested program? Yes No

5. Are you planning to use the group shelter? Yes No

The Group shelter is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and seats about one school-bus full at a time.

SELF-GUIDED FIELD TRIP TO THE PARK – information

When your self-guided trip is confirmed, we will send you the following: a map/brochure of the Park, a parent information message in English and in Spanish, and tips for a safe and enjoyable visit to the Park. Some basic information you might find helpful is included here.

Day-use Fee

The Park day-use fee is an entrance fee, NOT a parking fee and it applies to *all groups* visiting the Park (even if the bus does not park in the lot). The Rio Grande Nature Center State Park is an enterprise agency, and 70% of its operating budget is earned through entrance fees. Thank you for supporting the Park!

Day-use fees are as follows:

- Private vehicle (7 or fewer seats) = \$3 cash (exact) or check at the self-pay station. If a current NM State Parks annual permit or Friends of the Rio Grande Nature Center permit is displayed on the dash, there is no additional fee. This one-day permit may be purchased online in advance at: <https://newmexicostateparks.reserveamerica.com/unifSearch.do>
- School bus/van (8+ seats) = \$15 cash (exact) or check. *Please pay a Park staff member directly at the Visitor Center.*
- Private tour bus = \$50 cash (exact) or check. *Please pay a Park staff member directly at the Visitor Center.*

Facilities

Bathrooms and water are available at the Visitor Center between 10AM and 4PM. Please, no more than one class at a time in the Visitor Center. Face masks are recommended indoors. Picnic tables at the group shelter are available on a first-come basis.

Resources

Know before you go! The NM State Parks website, www.emnrd.nm.gov includes hours, location, restrictions/closures, maps and info about amenities and events for each park. There is also information about day-use and camping fees, reservations, and annual permits. Click the “Find a Park” tab and select Rio Grande Nature Center to see information about RGNCSP.

The Friends of Rio Grande Nature Center (FRGNC), is a 501c3 organization devoted to helping the Park with its mission, “*To preserve and protect the Rio Grande Bosque, educate the public about the Rio Grande ecosystems, and to foster positive human interactions with those systems.*” One way in which the FRGNC helps the Park is through its financial support of the Park’s education programming. To learn more about events, memberships, donations, and volunteering, please visit www.rgnc.org

The Bosque Education Guide (a K-12 interdisciplinary curriculum about the Middle Rio Grande Bosque Ecosystem) is available, in part, at the following website <http://www.nmnaturalhistory.org/educational-resources/sections/bosque-education-guide>. There you will find both classroom and field activities which you may find useful. Some materials are available in Spanish as well as in English. For a self-guided visit, check out Chapter 3: *Going Out – Field Activities*. Teacher training workshops for the Guide happen several times per year. Contact us for more information.