Photo credit: K. Vargas

Photo credit: Dr. Jane Packard

Photo credit: K. Vargas

Photo credit: www.asergeev.com

Photo credit: www.nps.gov

Photo credit: Alan Field. www.panoramio.com

Wolf Pen Creek Outdoor Learning Informational Guide

City of College Station

Wolf Pen Creek

City of College Station Parks and Recreation
1015 Colgate Drive College Station, Texas 77840

Welcome to Wolf Pen Creek Corridor!

Photo credit: www. activerain.com

We look forward to working with educators to provide exciting and educational outdoor experiences for their students at Wolf Pen Creek Corridor.

During this trip you will have the opportunity to experience an environment characteristic of a riparian corridor. Students will participate in a wide variety of engaging outdoor learning activities aligned with state standards to maximize their critical thinking and develop an understanding of scientific concepts.

What is a Riparian Area?

Photo credit: www.asergeev.com

A riparian area is a zone bordering a body of water such as Wolf Pen Creek. The interactions between the land and water create a habitat for plants and wildlife. It is not only essential for creatures and plants that live in these habitats, but it also plays a significant role in maintaining water quality, which people need to live.

Riparian areas are important to sustain the ecological health of a stream, provide erosion and flood control, and prevent sediment pollution. A continuous corridor of natural vegetation along the creek does many things to help keep a healthy, stable stream ecosystem, making the riparian corridor very important.

Learning about Wolf Pen Creek Corridor, the riparian plant community, and the sensitive species of native animals that dependent upon our local riparian habitat will help us protect it and keep all benefits it provides to our community.

Photo credit: www.asergeev.com

About Wolf Pen Creek Corridor

Photo credit: K. Vargas

Wolf Pen Creek originates on Texas A&M campus, and flows east into Carter Creek, approximately 2.5 miles down stream.
The City adopted the first Wolf Pen Creek Corridor Master Plan in 1988 to promote urban development, recreational opportunities, manage drainage, and preserve the creek's plants and wildlife.
Since then, it has been the subject of considerable planning and substantial public and private investment.

Photo credit: www.asergeev.com

Today, you can find an amphitheater that attracts hundreds of visitors every year, walking and biking trails, observation decks, a disk golf course, a playground area, rest rooms facilities, and a picnic pavilion.

In 2007, community volunteers, Texas A&M students, and City employees installed interpretive signs along the trails to enhance the greenways education program, instruct citizens and visitors on how nature works in urban environments, and to promote the value of local natural resources.

Outdoor Experiences: Our Approach

Photo credit: www.asergeev.com

We aim to encourage discovery and ignite passion for nature. Our approach is a collaborative model between educators, learners, and community volunteers to promote experiential connections with the natural environment, and expand knowledge by bringing science concepts to life.

Photo credit: K. Vargas

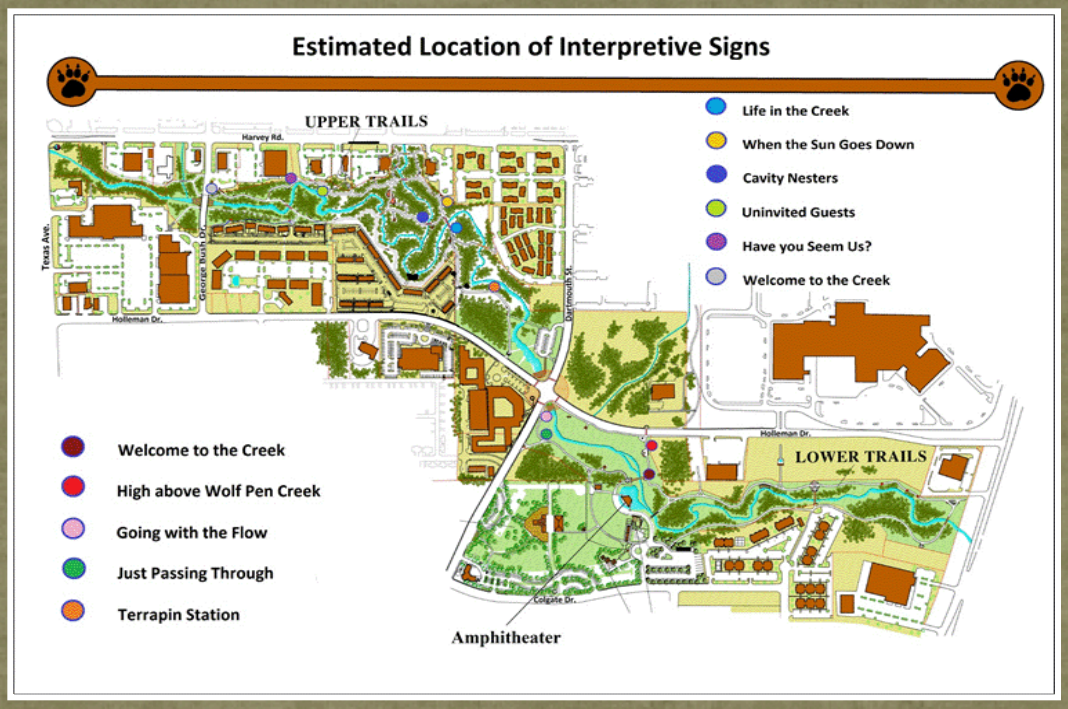
We deliver Project Wild, Project Wild Aquatic, and Growing Up Wild learning activities that are correlated to grade level Science TEKS and the interpretive signage found along the trails at Wolf Pen Creek.

Learning Stations

During the field day, students will be engaged in hands-on learning at different stations. Teaching Trunks are available with all materials needed to satisfy the curriculum objectives.

Volunteer guides will lead groups of students facilitating the activities, discussion and investigations. Stations are located along the trails and are designed to address content goals and scientific inquiry outcomes.

Photo credit: www.stacylewis.com



Students will rotate through five stations at approximately 30-40 minute intervals. After the third rotation, student will break for lunch, and continue with the remaining two stations afterwards. The following is a suggested schedule for a 4-hour field trip.

- *9:00-9:20: Buses arrive/Welcome*
- *9:20-10:00: Station 1*
- *10:00-10:40: Station 2*
- *10:40-11:20: Station 3*
- *11:20-12:00: Lunch / Restroom break*
- *12:00-12:30: Station 4*
- *12:30-1:00: Station 5*
- *1:00 – 1:15 Dismissal*

The program can accommodate a maximum of 25 students per station and is targeted to grades K-5.

Facilities: *Trails, interpretive signs, amphitheater, green room, playground area, restrooms.*

Pre and Post Field Trip Activities

Materials are available with pre and post-visit activities to help educators and students prepare for their outdoor nature exploration, and reinforce their experience after their visit. A downloadable Teacher's Guide is available at our website. It includes suggested literature to build background knowledge, vocabulary, concepts, and key questions as well as classroom activities.

Field Trip Check List

Please follow the following suggestions to ensure a safe, enjoyable and productive visit to Wolf Pen Creek Park.

Before Your Visit

- *Clarify educational goals.*
- *Select and deliver pre-visit activities with your class.*
- *Explain behavioral expectations to your students.*
- *Prepare nametags for all students.*
- *Plan to arrive no later than 9:15 am.*

Photo credit: www. dunwoodynature.org

During Your Visit

- *Certain distractions hinder a meaningful learning experience for students. We strongly discourage the use of toys, cellphones and cameras during the visit. Large, heavy, and wheeled backpacks are also discouraged.*
- *Make sure students are accompanied by an adult at all times.*
- *Remind students to stay on the paths or the area where the activity is being delivered.*
- *Students need to pick up their trash, and respect green areas, plants and wildlife.*
- *Encourage students to ask questions, observe collect evidence, and form opinions.*

After Your Visit

- *Please take time to complete an evaluation and return it to Wolf Pen Creek Park. We also welcome student letters.*
- *Encourage follow up family visits to Wolf Pen Creek following the field trip to give your students the opportunity to share what they have learned.*
- *Download the Teacher's Guide available at our website to reinforce and build upon your students' experience.*

We look forward to seeing you at Wolf Pen Creek!

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