



Prince William Forest Park

This presentation is meant to prepare you and your students for your school's trip to the NatureBridge program at Prince William Forest Park.

- About NatureBridge
- Prince William Forest's Classroom
- A Typical Day at NatureBridge
- Learning Groups
- Lodging & Dining
- What to Bring
- Student and Family Agreements
- Next Steps



- Nonprofit organization, founded in 1971
- Partner of the National Park Service
- Campuses include: Golden Gate, Yosemite and Olympic
- Welcomes over 600 schools and 30,000 students each year

NatureBridge:

- nonprofit organization
- Partner of the National Park Service, our other campuses are in Golden Gate and Yosemite in California, and Olympic in Washington state.
- NatureBridge has been offering programs since 1971, has served over a million students, and serves at least 30,000 each year
- Prince William Forest Park program – This is the 8th school year of our first East Coast program, serves over 40 schools and about 2,000 students each year



Prince William Forest



- Only 35 miles south of Washington D.C.
- 15,000 acres of piedmont forest
- Pristine streams, waterfalls, 37 miles of trails

Prince William Forest Park – National Park in your backyard!

- 23 square mile park, bordering Quantico Marine Base
- 15,000 acres of piedmont forest
- Pristine streams, waterfalls, 37 miles of trails
- The star marks the location of Cabin Camp 1, the site of NatureBridge programs



Prince William Forest's Classroom



Environmental Science



**Team Building &
Self-Reflection**



Experiencing the Outdoors

The Park provides a beautiful setting for science experiments, spending time outdoors, and getting to know classmates and teachers better.



Sample Day

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast*
9:00 a.m.	Trail day begins
~12:00 p.m.	Lunch on trail
~4:00 p.m.	Recreation time (chaperones will supervise)
6:00 p.m.	Dinner*
7:15 p.m.	Evening program
9:30 p.m.	Quiet campus, lights out

*Meal times may change if there are multiple meal shifts. Early meals: 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Late meals: 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

- Sample activities on the trail: - water quality testing, identifying plants and animals (including the park's many reptiles and amphibians), group games and team challenges, hiking up to 4 miles in a day (spread out with activities in between)
- Science investigations: asking questions, making observations, collecting data
- During meals: lessons on food waste, landfills, and composting
- We support our Teachers and Chaperones. They supervise students before and after the trail day (until 9:00AM and after 4:00PM)



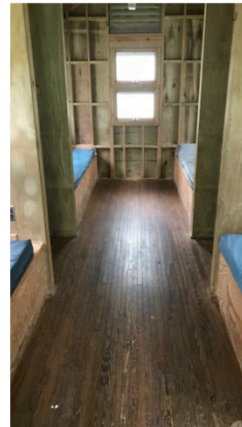
- **12-15** students and **1 or 2** chaperones
- Spend the day together on trail
- Learning Groups are led by professional NatureBridge educators
 - Bachelor's Degree or equivalent work and training experience
 - cleared background checks
 - certified to manage risk in the field, trained in Wilderness First Aid
- *Learning Groups will be arranged by your school's group coordinator*

Educators – high-quality, outdoor teachers

- Our focus is on personal growth, improved interpersonal skills, and increased academic ability
- We strive to create a community atmosphere in which all students experience support and success.
- Educators prepare specifically for each group they work with using information provided by the school



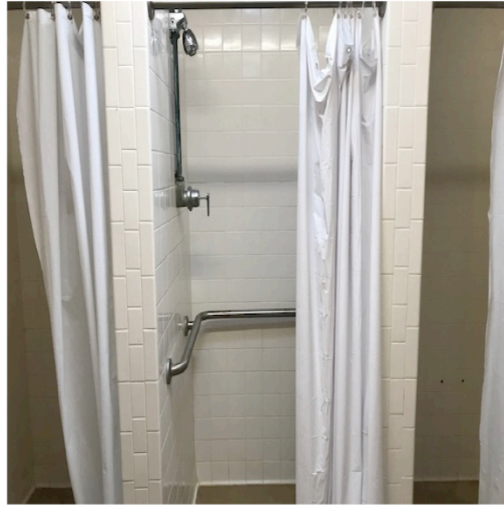
Cabin Camp 1



Inside the cabins

Accommodations:

- 4-6 students per cabin (some bunk beds, some single)
- Foam mattresses
- You will bring sleeping bag, pillow, etc
- There are eight cabins in each Cabin Unit.
- Schools can choose to assign cabins however they like, as long as there are at least two adults in each Cabin Loop.
- There will typically not be an adult in every cabin with students, but all of the cabins are close to one another



Each Cabin Loop has a bath house that has several sinks, showers, and toilets. The bath houses have electricity and warm water.



Dining Lodge



Inside the Dining Lodge

Breakfast and dinner will be served in the dining lodge. This building will also serve as the main meeting place on campus.

- Meals are served cafeteria style and there are plenty of options
- Kitchen staff will be receiving information about dietary needs and allergies before the program and will make the needed accommodations
- Food is nutritious

Sample breakfast:

- Eggs, turkey sausage, hash browns, oatmeal, fruit salad

Sample Lunch (served on the trail):

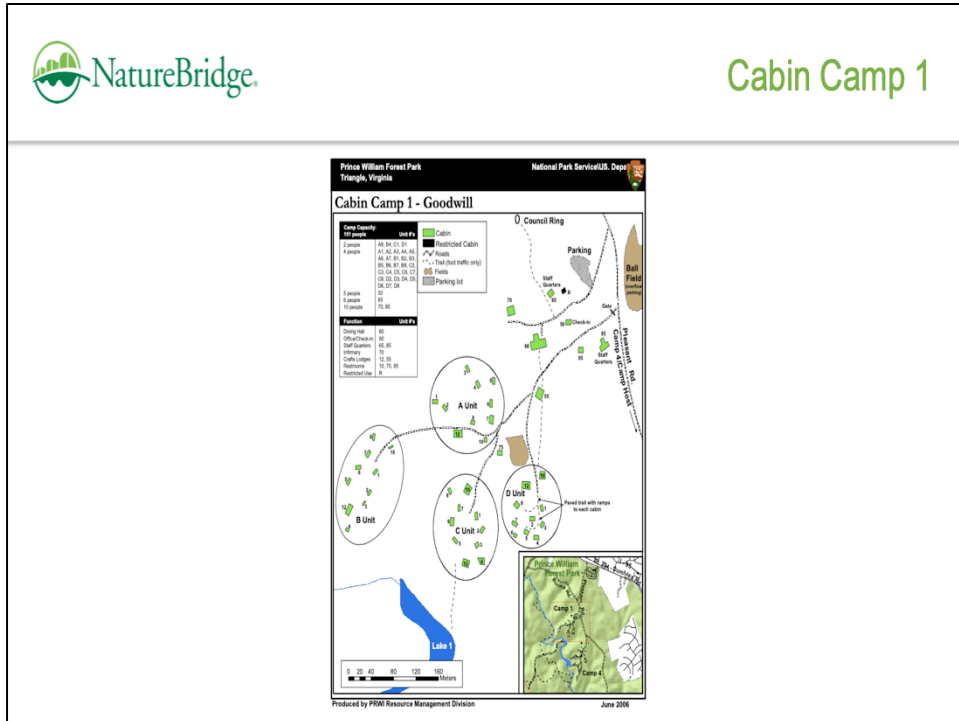
- Turkey & cheese sandwich, hummus with carrots, celery sticks, trail mix

Sample dinner:

- Baked Pasta w/ cheese and marinara sauce, broccoli, breadsticks, salad, brownie (dessert)



There are several lodges on campus that can serve as indoor classrooms. Don't plan on staying inside all day, though. Be prepared to be outside in inclement weather.



Campus Map

- Girls and boys usually in separate cabin units (some small groups may all be in one unit)
- During some programs, the campus is shared by 2 or more schools. In that case, cabin assignments will be made according to participant numbers.

Typically schools will use A & B Unit together or C & D Unit together

-NOTE: all equipment will be dropped off at the ball-field, about 1/5 of a mile from cabin loops: don't bring more than you can carry! One back-pack for the trail, sleeping bag, and one medium-sized duffle bag with clothes, etc.



What to Bring: Bedding



Warm Sleeping Bag
and/or
Warm Blankets and
Sheets

Pillow



Please look at the Clothing and Equipment List provided by your Group Coordinator



What to Bring: Clothing

Good gear is functional, but doesn't need to be fancy!
Read the packing list carefully and be prepared for all kinds of weather and for getting dirty.

- rain gear
- sturdy shoes
- warm hat
- gloves
- extra socks
- sun hat
- medications
- flashlight
- toiletries
- towel/wash cloth

You don't need to go out and buy brand new clothes and equipment! Borrow what you can, you should be well-prepared, but remember it's only 3 days.

- Rain jackets are preferred, a warm fleece jacket with a poncho will work as well.
- Bring hiking boots if you have them, but sturdy sneakers will work as well. An extra pair of shoes to wear around camp and sandals for the bath house are recommended.
- 3-4 pairs of socks are recommended, bring one just for sleeping in the cabin
- Students are strongly advised NOT TO WEAR SHORTS: temperatures may vary drastically, also shorts will limit the ability to hike off-trail through sometimes thick under-brush.
- Students must bring medications with them (including inhalers, etc.)
Chaperones will need to be sure that students have all of the medications that they may need while on the trail or on campus.
- NOTE: Parents, please tell your Group Coordinator if there are items that your child will not have. NatureBridge can loan certain items. We want all students to participate and don't want anyone to stay home because they don't have certain things.



What to Bring: Daypack

Carry in your backpack every day:

- Bag lunch for 1st Day!
- Large water bottle (full of water)
- Journal and two sharp pencils
- Extra layers of warm clothing
- Hat and gloves
- Rain gear
- Bandana (used for lunch placemat)
- (Optional: camera or binoculars)



Things to have in daypacks:

- Remind students to only bring lunch for the first day, no other food is allowed in cabins!*
- Chaperones are responsible for making sure students have necessary medications with them on the trail (inhalers, epi-pens, etc.).
- Students should have an extra layer at all times, but the type of layer will depend on the temperature/weather



Student and Family Agreements

- All students and adults are expected to fully participate in all aspects of the program.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for picking up their child in Prince William Forest if they are too ill to hike, injured or need to be sent home because of a behavior violation.
- Safe and inclusive behavior is important. Students are expected to follow all behavior guidelines. **Students must review student expectations prior to the trip.**
- **NatureBridge Cell Phone Policy:**
 - Policy [4.16] When student participants are in learning groups with NatureBridge educators and school chaperones, cell phones should be set in airplane mode and used only for taking photos, video or specific school projects. When student participants are not in learning groups, any cell phone use will be supervised by teachers and chaperones. Student participants may not use cell phones in NatureBridge cabins, dining halls, or bathrooms.

NatureBridge will do what is possible to keep students on site and participating in the program.

NatureBridge staff will be included in any discussions about students leaving the program early.

NatureBridge cell phone policy: We don't allow cell phones to be a distraction during program time. We ask that if students and chaperones have phones with them, they remain on airplane mode throughout the day. Students are permitted to use the camera feature on their phones at appropriate times.

We advise schools to develop a cell phone policy that works best for them. Here are some options:

- *No cell phones. Teachers provide phone numbers to parents to contact in case of emergency, teachers will contact parents if there are any issues with students*
- ***RECOMMENDED if students are permitted to bring phones, they are collected by teachers. All phones are labeled and passed out for a 10-20 minute window in the evening before or after dinner. Students are permitted to call/text home, and then return phones to teachers. Parents***



Next Steps

- Registration Forms:
Your school's group coordinator will give you a copy of the NatureBridge registration form.
- Modes of Communication:
NatureBridge will be in direct contact with your school's group coordinator. Please direct all questions to that individual.
- Timeline and Calendar:
Please adhere to all deadlines dictated by your school's group coordinator. This ensures that NatureBridge can provide the safest/highest quality program for your student.
- Visit NatureBridge's website to learn more: naturebridge.org/princewilliamforest

The Group Coordinator from the school will be the main point of contact for parents and participants. If there are questions that the Group Coordinator cannot answer, they will contact NatureBridge staff. In some cases, parents will be referred directly to NatureBridge staff.



Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Contact

NatureBridge Cell Phone: 703-634-9041
(Google Voice)

- Will be answered by Jim Serfass or other NatureBridge staff member
- Contact Group Coordinator for non-emergencies

The Group Coordinator is expected to share their contact information with parents. Other chaperones' contact information can also be provided.

-NatureBridge Google voice number: 703-634-9041 This number is for emergencies only. If parents need to contact their children, but cannot reach a teacher, they should call this number. This number should not be called to "check on" student participants.

NatureBridge looks forward to welcoming your school to Prince William Forest!



Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: cabin and group assignments: teachers will determine who is in which cabin and group, this can be done a few different ways.

A: Option 1: Students can write the names of 2-3 students they want to share a cabin with, students that share a cabin are then assigned to different learning groups (this works especially well for schools bringing 4 learning groups)

Option 2: Students can list people they definitely don't want to share a cabin/ learning group with

Option 3: Group Coordinator assigns all cabins/groups with no input from students

Q: Campus safety procedures (at night):

A: Adult chaperones in each cabin unit, 1 NatureBridge staff member on-site serving as on-call contact for emergencies, park dispatch: very quick response time. There is a gate on the road leading in to Cabin Camp 1, also the camp is separated from all other roads in the park, not easily accessible from any other point in the park.

Q: pick-up/drop-off times

A: Those arrangements are made by the Group Coordinator. Schools often designate a room or space for students to store equipment on the days they depart and return on the trip.