

promote

Cache la Poudre River
National Heritage Area

LEARNING IN OUR WATERSHED™

"One student said, 'This is the BEST DAY ever!' and another student wants to be a wildlife biologist now! The support with bus funds makes all of the difference in our attending! We only get \$200 a year for field trips, and could not have gone if it weren't for your help! THANK YOU!"

– 4th grade teacher from Weld County

OVERVIEW

Are student field trips a thing of the past? With skyrocketing bus costs and the expectation that educators pack as much standards-related content into the school day as possible, many schools are viewing field trips as an unattainable luxury. However, nothing replaces the social and educational perspectives gained through firsthand experiences. So, the Poudre Heritage Alliance (PHA) provides grant funds to all K-12 school teachers in Larimer and Weld County to hire buses to bring their students on field trips to the Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area (CALA).

Our mission is simple – to help youth understand and value the Poudre River and their water heritage, ensuring a next generation of river stewards.

With cutbacks in school funding for field trips, bus transportation grants seek to remove barriers to accessing CALA and its wealth of historical, natural and cultural sites. The students from Weld County are 61% free or reduced lunch and 60% Hispanic. The youth from Poudre School District are 31% free or reduced lunch and 27% minority.



Learning in Our Watershed represents the first step on a continuum of engagement. We hope these field trips will spark an interest in CALA and forge stronger connections to both nature and our shared river history. Students get to see the river for themselves at a young age which can help them grow up knowing that the Cache la Poudre River is in their backyard. These experiences reinforce that the river is a valuable resource not only for academics but also for practical experiences. Many different types of curriculums are taught in conjunction with this program—everything from Native American History to wildlife biology.

poudreheritage.org/field-trip-grants/

OVERVIEW

Elements of the Learning in Our Watershed Program include:

- All K-12 schools that are located in Weld or Larimer Counties qualify to submit an application.
- The field trips are designed to foster the study of water, water law and its relevance to future water security, water management, and/or to help develop a 'sense of place' – the Poudre River corridor.
- 17 sites or annual water-related festivals within CALA are automatically "approved" for field trip destinations. Examples include: Centennial Village, Environmental Learning Center, Greeley Museum, Children's Water Festivals in Fort Collins and Greeley, the Poudre Learning Center, and more.
- Other destinations may be approved on a case-by-case basis.
- Grants are approved while funding remains. However, funding is limited, so we hope to be able to expand this program and bring more children to the Poudre River.

PARTNERS

Poudre, Big Thompson, and Weld County School Districts

GOALS & OUTCOMES

Goal:

Expand opportunities for youth to directly experience and come to appreciate the Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area.

Outcomes:

- Students and teachers visit CALA for the first time.
- Students and teachers enhance knowledge of CALA and National Heritage Areas.
- Participants express interest and return to CALA for more experiences after program.
- Teachers develop awareness or understanding of CALA as a resource for youth activities/learning.
- PHA outreach to the public, partners, and schools.

BUDGET: \$29,750

Each contribution makes an impact:

- \$50 – Supplies and materials for one field trip
- \$250 – One bus for a student class field trip
- \$2,500 – Photography/video services for program
- \$5,000 – State standard curriculums that incorporate interpretative signage and educators

