

Overnight Trip Proposal
For Approval

Polk County Early College Trailblazers Outdoor Club

- 50 students (final number may vary) grades 9-12
- 5 teachers/staff members from Polk County Early College
- 5 Parents of Polk County Early College Students

Trip to Nantahala National Forest

Submitted to:

Mrs. Mary Greene,

&

Polk County School Board

Submitted by:

Ms. Kathleen Abraham

Polk County Early College Science Instructor

Key Club Advisor

Trailblazer Outdoor Club Sponsor

January 31, 2024

Background: Polk County Early College has been awarded a Go Outside \$10,000 grant for the 2024-2025 school year from the North Carolina Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission (NCYOEC). They provide these grants to schools for the integration of Trailblazers Outdoor Clubs. The NCYOEC is a state agency that operates with funding from the NC General Assembly and donors.

According to the commission, the goal of the Trailblazer Clubs is “To provide structure and support to North Carolina high school students who wish to pursue outdoor activities, develop leadership skills, and cultivate comradery and to see a future where North Carolina’s students learn the skills and develop the confidence to be stewards of the outdoors. Our strategic programming initiatives are designed to address the barriers to the outdoors that young North Carolinians face today. Outdoor experiences vital to mental and physical wellbeing and afford students the opportunity for an alternative style of hands-on learning.”
Part of the grant was already spent on a White Water Rafting trip in August, 2024.

Funding: Our grant proposal includes the funding to purchase enough camping gear for the whole school to go camping in the fall of 2024 and beyond. This includes tents, coolers, sleeping bags, camp stoves, and sleeping pads. The grant also requests funding for food, transportation, camping fees, and enrichment programs.

We would be using an activity bus. There would be no cost for the students.

Outdoor Club Supplies				
Item	cost per unit	number of units	total cost	notes
camping tent (large)	199.95	6	1199.7	Kelty discovery element
tarp for ground	4.66	16	74.56	hyper tough 6x8 walmart
Camp stove	109.99	1	109.99	Coleman
stove fuel 32 ounce/day	11.99	7	83.93	
Food and consumables	60	40	2400	15/day per person x 4 days
Cooler	129.99	2	259.98	Igloo 110 quart glide pro portable
binoculars	50	10	500	tasco essentials 8x42
		total	4628.16	

Other Costs	
Campsite (3)	450
Bus cost 400 miles	1600
Cost of Programming with Highlands Institute	25

Objectives: While the staff here at Polk County Early College is excited to introduce our students to outdoor adventures in order to promote physical and mental well-being, our overarching goal is to bring what we do in the classroom alive. For example, the southeast of the United states has the greatest diversity of salamanders in the world. We will be partnering with Highlands Biological Research Station and Western Carolina University

to learn how to survey for salamanders in the field. These important skills provide the groundwork for learning how to do biological research, how to collect data and make inferences, and how to monitor populations.

Dates and Itinerary: Our planned dates are April 9-11, 2025. We have reserved 3 group campsites at Standing Indian Campground in Nantahala National Forest. We chose this campground because this is where Highlands Biological does salamander surveys, so they will meet us on site.

Planned itinerary.

Day 1: Leave PCEC in the morning and drive to Standing Indian Campground.

- Lunch at Campground
- Learn camping skills and set up camp and spend the rest of the day hiking trails around campground
- Dinner at campground

Day 2: Highlands Biological Station Staff meets us at the Campground and we spend the day learning how to complete biological surveys and collect and interpret biological data. The focus will be on salamander species.

- Breakfast, Lunch, and dinner at campground

Day 3:

- Breakfast at campground
- Hike Trails at Campground
- Pack up camp
- Drive back to PCEC from the Outdoor Center.

Location:

Standing Indian Campground

3829 West Old Murphy Rd, Franklin, NC 28734-7702

(828) 369-0442

Route:

US-74 W and I-40 to US-74 W/Great Smoky Mountains Expy in Haywood County. Take exit 27 from I-40
53 min (55.0 mi)

Then US-74 W/Great Smoky Mountains Expy, US-23 S and US-64 W to National Forest Rd in Macon County
1 hr 11 min (62.0 mi)

Chaperone List: List is incomplete as we are still arranging approved chaperones

Mary Greene

Kathleen Abraham

Lisa Chapman

Jessica Simo

Antonio Garcia

Ethan Hardee

Dario Rivera

Thank you for your consideration.

