

Outdoor Classroom

Field Trip and Activity Planner



SCHEDULING:

The link to schedule a date and time for the entire 2025-2026 school year can be found [here](#).

ACCESS TO THE CLASSROOM:

Each school office has a key to the Outdoor Classroom. An extra key is housed at PSC. Please make arrangements to pick up the key prior to your departure and please return it the next working day so it is available for the next group that will go out.

WHERE IS THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM:

The Outdoor Classroom is located in Lake Wissota State Park. To get to Lake Wissota State Park, follow these directions.

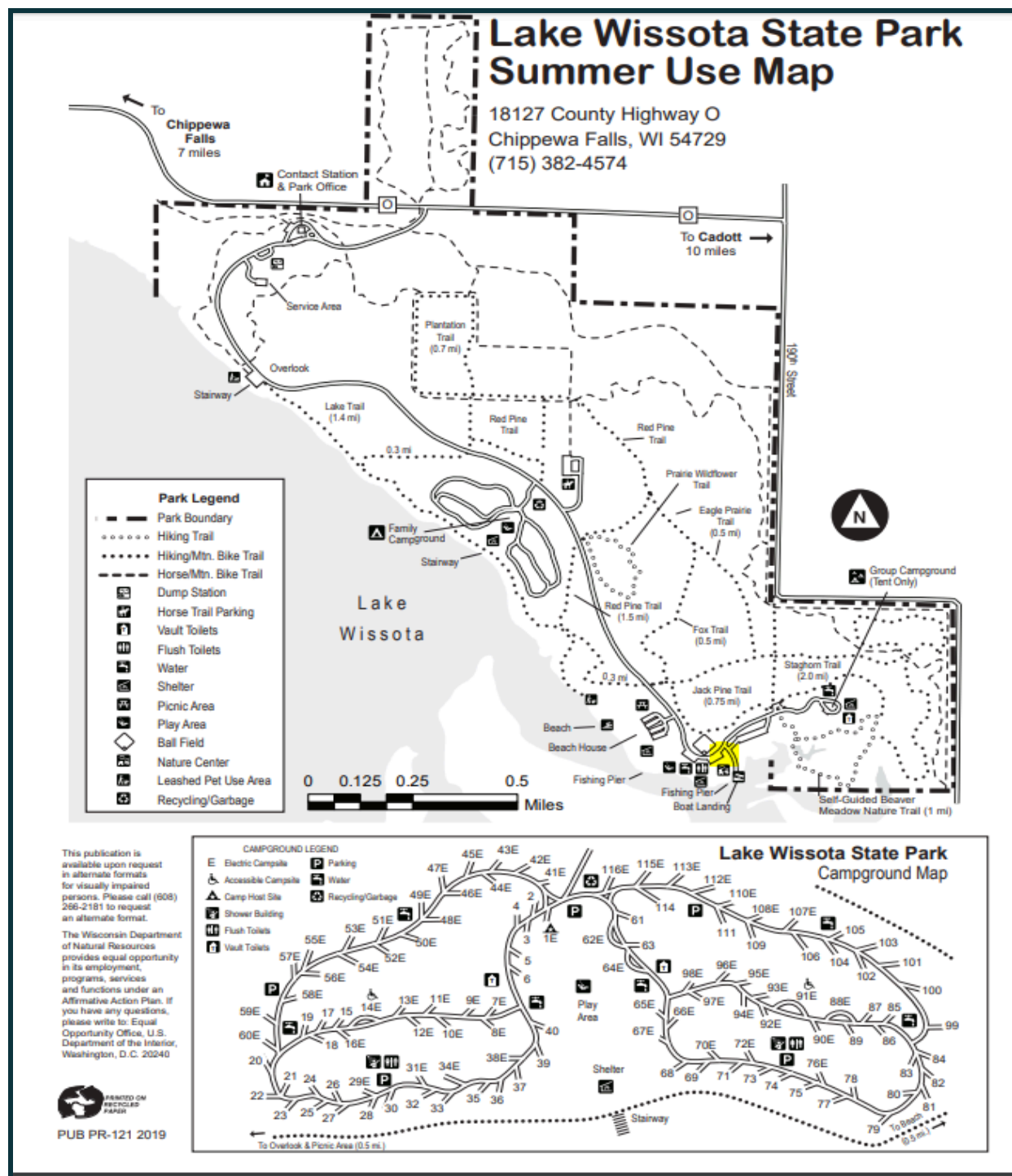
Directions

From Chippewa Falls: take State Highway 178 north to County Highway S. Turn right (east) on Highway S. In about 2 miles, Highway S goes over the Chippewa River where it empties into Lake Wissota. About 500 feet after the bridge, turn right (east) on County Highway O. Go about 2 miles to the park entrance, which will be on your right.

From State Highway 27: about 2 miles north of Cadott turn west on County Highway O. Continue on Highway O about 8.4 miles. The park entrance will be on your left. Geographic coordinates of the park entrance are 44° 58' 51.75" N, 91° 18' 15.32" W.

- **The park is open year-round from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.**

The Outdoor Classroom is highlighted in yellow on the map. the classroom is located next to parking and bathrooms.



***After You Have Received Administrative Approval
Please Complete The Following Checklist***

- ☐ Choose and reserve a date at the Outdoor Classroom on the [reservation sheet](#).

- ☐ Coordinate all arrangements:
 - ☐ Reservations
 - ☐ Transportation
 - ☐ Parent permission slips
 - ☐ Coordinate Chaperones

- ☐ Create activity schedules and secure materials including name tags.

- ☐ Pick up the key to the classroom from PSC. Visit the site before your trip.

- ☐ If you need a SPED bus, please contact the SPED department at PSC prior to the field trip for approval.

- ☐ Notify food service with a total number of students missing lunch, if more than 50 students are involved. If special lunches are needed, please arrange in advance.

- ☐ Provide student list, copy of this form, and copy of parent letter sent home to the main office administrative assistant

- ☐ Coordinate field trip permission/authorization for emergency transport and treatment forms

- ☐ Secure first aid kit and complete field trip medication and health concern check sheet with the nurse's office.

- ☐ Review field trip behavior expectations with students

- ☐ Have fun!

Preparing For Your Visit To The Outdoor Classroom

SCHEDULING A BUS:

Schedule the bus early. It is always a good idea to call the bus company a few days before your trip to make sure that you are on the schedule. If you cancel your trip, be sure to notify the bus company so you are not charged.

CLOTHING:

Children should dress for the weather. There isn't any bad weather, only poor clothing. There are very nice LL Bean jackets at the park for rainy weather. During the winter, all the students must wear winter boots, snow pants, winter jackets, hats and gloves. If a child is not dressed for the weather, you can check the school lost and found and borrow something for the day.

DRESSING FOR THE OUTDOORS IN WINTER

HEAD AND HANDS: Wear a hat and gloves or mittens. Stretchy "mickey mouse" gloves are not warm enough. Each child needs at least one pair of heavy gloves or mittens. If you have extra, send them with your child. Gloves/mittens get wet and it is nice to have an extra pair.

UPPER BODY: Dress your child in layers. A long sleeve shirt, light jacket, sweatshirt and last a heavy jacket. If your child warms up, they can take off layers.

LOWER BODY: Long pants and Snow pants. The snow pants should be long enough to cover the boots and not so long that they drag on the ground.

FEET: Full socks, NOT ANKLETS, are essential. Winter snow boots are also essential.

FOOD AND WATER: Pack a healthy substantial lunch for your child.. He/she will be hungry after skiing. Also pack water. There is not any running water in the park in the winter

WEATHER:

SPRING/FALL: If it is raining, the students can use the rain jackets. However, occasionally you may have to cancel due to severe weather.

WINTER: The Park environment is very different from what is happening in Chippewa Falls. There may be snow when there is not any in town. The park grooms the trails as soon as there is snow. The trails become packed down and the snow does not melt easily. If there is not enough snow to snowshoe, you can hike on the trails.

EMERGENCIES:

It is strongly recommended that all groups bring a **cell phone** with them for emergencies. **Call 911** for a medical emergency. Remember to complete an accident report with your nurse/health aide upon return.

LUNCH:

Each child brings lunch from school or home. Waste free lunch and pack it in/pack it out

has been the lunch theme. All garbage is taken home by each student. Please be sure all the students have something to drink. Most of the year the water is turned off. Please ask the students to avoid bringing soda pop.

CLEAN UP:

Groups are responsible for their own clean up efforts. Please be sure the classroom is swept and organized for the next group to enjoy the facility. All waste should be packed out and disposed of back at school. Please report any broken or damaged items to Katie Coppenbarger.

CHAPERONES:

Parents and other family members are welcome to join us. We have a volunteer guideline sheet that you are welcome to share with your parents before your trip. It is good to have a minimum of three adults to assist for each class.



Effective Chaperoning:

Thank you so much for your willingness to chaperone our trip to the outdoor classroom! Your assistance in assuring that our students have a wonderful and safe experience is very much appreciated. Here are some general guidelines that will help clarify your role

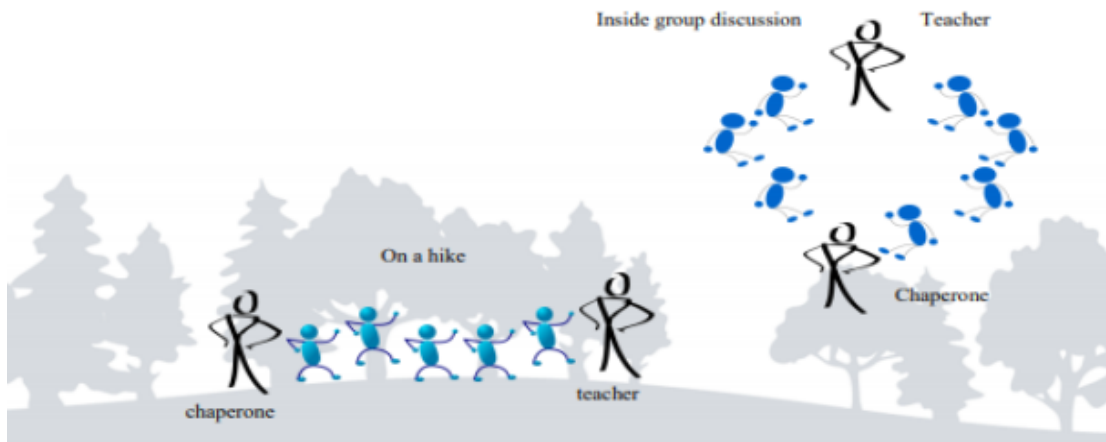
- ☐ Provide assistance at the teacher's discretion.
- ☐ If assigned to a specific group of students, take attendance multiple times (transitions)
- ☐ Address students by their name.

- ❑ Actively participate in the supervision of all students by helping to encourage involvement and conduct that is appropriate in an educational setting.
- ❑ Help discourage inappropriate behavior by positively re-directing students to the activity at hand.
- ❑ Enjoy the program's activities and reinforce the students' enthusiasm
- ❑ Prioritize socializing with the other chaperones during on the bus and/or at lunch.

The following are helpful tips to help you situate yourself among the students:

On a Hike: be the last one in line to assure that all students are in sight.

Group Discussion: sit/stand across from the teacher to provide proximity to more students



ACTIVITY and PROGRAM PLANNER

PROGRAM THEMES BY GRADE LEVEL:

The following is a brief summary of the themes that Karen typically covered for each grade and season. **You are welcome to continue to follow this plan or if you prefer to align your experience with a science topic you are teaching in your class at this time, you are welcome to do so.**

We have acquired many new resources to draw from so you are welcome to check them out at PSC if you wish!

KINDERGARTEN: *Spring* The students are introduced to the park. We do several activities to learn about animal camouflage. In the afternoon we hike the nature trail and visit the pond.

FIRST GRADE: *Fall* The theme is Prairie. We learn about life on the prairie and hike up to the prairie. In the afternoon, we Adopt A Tree in the picnic area.

SECOND GRADE: *Fall/Spring* Second grade is divided between Fall and Spring. We walk the Lake Trail (about 2 miles) that starts at the top of the park and ends at the Outdoor Classroom. Depending upon the season, we look for signs of spring and fall. We learn many of the trees and plants native to Wisconsin.

THIRD GRADE: *Spring* This is the culmination of the spring/fall program for the students. We review many of the concepts learned in earlier years... Depending on weather, we visit nesting bluebirds, mating frogs and toads, pond study and the awakening of spring. The afternoon is spent building survival shelters and boats. We float our boats to the Gulf of Mexico from the boat landing on Lake Wissota.

FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADES: *Winter*: These two grades snowshoe and cross-country ski. All the equipment is at the park. The fourth grade focuses on the 4R's: Reuse, Recycle, Reduce, and Refuse and the fifth graders learn about energy conservation. Walking on the ski trails is not permitted. The trails are groomed for skiing and walking ruins the ski track and encourages others to walk on the trails.

Lake Wissota State Park

Trail descriptions



Beaver Meadow Nature trail (1 mile)



Among the park's most scenic trails is the one-mile self-guided Beaver Meadow Nature trail. A trail overlook allows visitors to view the environment and wildlife found in a beaver pond.



Prairie Wildflower Nature trail (0.5 miles)



The self-guided Prairie Wildflower Nature trail in the middle of the park offers an up-close view of tall grasses and a variety of other plants.



Cross-country ski trails (8 miles)

About eight miles of cross-country ski trails are groomed for both traditional stride and skate skiing. Hikers, snowshoers and pets must keep off the trails when they are snow-covered and groomed.



Snowshoe trails (10 miles)

The park has about 10 miles of trail open for snowshoeing. During winter, about 5 miles of trail are maintained and groomed as multi-use trails, allowing for hiking, fat tire biking and skiing in addition to snowshoeing.