GREAT SALT LAKE FIELD TRIP GUIDE

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This document is intended to provide educators with the necessary resources to facilitate a meaningful field trip to the Great Salt Lake. The document provides information about where to take students as well as information about good activities to facilitate at the lake, and a flow of events to follow. Of course, don’t hesitate to modify anything to better fit the needs of your students.

PLANNING

- Allot the time and reserve the transportation
  - You will need approximately 3 hours at the lake, plus drive time to and from your chosen destination.
  - Transportation should take whatever form your school prefers.

- Choose a location
  - Antelope Island State Park
    - Overview: Antelope Island is an excellent spot for field trips. The island itself is beautiful, birds are plentiful, and access to the lake is excellent.
    - Red tape: As a state park, Antelope Island is a fee area. However, rates are very reasonable. Before your trip, contact Antelope Island State Park directly for more information about field trips, and discounted rates for educators.
    - One-way drive time: From Salt Lake City ~ 45 minutes; from Layton ~ 25 minutes; from Ogden ~ 35 minutes; from Brigham City ~ 55 minutes.
    - When to go: Comfortable temperatures and plentiful wildlife make fall the ideal time to take students to the lake. Biting gnats are abundant in the spring so you’ll need head nets for everyone. Winter temperatures are typically colder than they are in the city, and summer temperatures are typically hotter so be sure your students have weather appropriate clothing.
    - Location details:
      - More about the island: Antelope Island is a large land mass located in the Southeast quadrant of Great Salt Lake. It’s home to a variety of animals. Most notably, Pronghorn Antelope and Bison. The island is also a frequent stop for a wide variety of birds that depend on the Great Salt Lake ecosystem for their food and habitat.
      - Where to take students:
        - Ladyfinger Point is an ideal stop for science-oriented field trips. To park there, take a slight right turn at your first opportunity after crossing the causeway, then take the next available right into a parking lot with a restroom and a small pavilion. From here you’ll have quick access to an unnamed bay to the North, and to Bridger Bay to the South.
        - Full driving directions from Salt Lake City are provided in the “Accompanying Resources” for this document on the GSLI web page.
  - Great Salt Lake State Park
    - Overview: Great Salt Lake State Park is a second good option for field trips. It’s closer to Salt Lake City than Antelope island and access to the lake is...
good, but doesn’t offer the same visual experience and you will probably see fewer birds.

- **Red tape:** Red tape: Great Salt Lake State Park is a fee area. However, rates are very reasonable. Before your trip, contact the park directly for more information about field trips, and discounted rates for educators.
- **One-way drive time:** From Salt Lake City ~ 25 minutes; from Layton ~ 40 minutes; from Ogden ~ 55 minutes; from Brigham City ~ 75 minutes.
- **When to go:** Just like Antelope Island, comfortable temperatures and plentiful wildlife make fall the ideal time to take students to the lake. The same precautions should be taken in other seasons at the Marina as those mentioned above for Antelope Island.

- **Location details:**
  - The Great Salt Lake Marina is home to the Great Salt Lake Yacht Club as well as a small visitor’s center. The best access to the lake is on the beach to your right as you pull into the Marina.
  - Full driving directions from Salt Lake City are provided in the “Accompanying Resources” for this document on the GSLI web page.

- Prepare your materials
  - In order to facilitate the field-based activities recommended later in this guide, you’ll need to gather materials to take with you to the lake. Specific materials will depend upon which activities you ultimately choose to facilitate. A full materials list for each activity is a part of the facilitation guides for each individual activity (available in the “Accompanying Resources” for this document).

- Prepare your students
  - Before the field trip, have your students complete the Great Salt Lake Scavenger Hunt available in the in the “Accompanying Resources” for this document on the GSLI web page. This is a worksheet that will get students thinking about Great Salt Lake.
  - On the day of the trip, students should be prepared to spend several hours outside. This means that each student should pack a daypack with the following items:
    - 1 Liter of water (minimum)
    - Lunch
    - Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)
    - Sun hat
    - Water shoes or old sneakers – you’ll want to warn students that their shoes will get dirty and salty so new shoes and nice shoes are off limits.
    - Rain jacket (check the forecast)
    - Warm layer (check the forecast)
    - Optional: copy of GSL Scavenger Hunt worksheet

**IN THE FIELD**

- **Introduction**
  - The Great Salt Lake Institute believes that field-based learning is the best kind of learning! From the field, students can engage actively with their environment and learn experientially. The flow of activities below is a recommended guide for your field trip. Certainly make it your own and engage the students in whatever way best fits the context of your class as well as your time constraints.
Field trip flow
  o Arrive at your chosen location
    ▪ Remind students the importance of sun protection and hydration!
  o Introduction and exploration (25 minutes)
    ▪ After approaching the beach, set defined boundaries for exploration within the beach area and ensure that students inform you or a chaperone before leaving those boundaries for any reason.
    ▪ Allow students to explore the area for 15 to 20 minutes. Tell them to look for things they learned about on their Great Salt Lake Scavenger Hunt. Can they spot any animals that they recognize?
  o Set-Up Activities (During exploration time)
    ▪ While students are exploring, find several locations on the beach to set-up the activities listed below. Information for set-up and a facilitation guide for each activity is available separately in the “Accompanying Resources” for this document on the GSLI webpage.
      • Water Cycle Bracelet Game
      • Water Exploration Station
      • Bird Beak Adaptation Activity
  o Facilitate the Water Cycle Bracelet Game w/ the group (20-30 minutes)
    ▪ Consult the facilitation guide available in the “Accompanying Resources” for this document on the GSLI web page.
  o Facilitate Water Exploration and Bird Beak Adaptation activities (60 minutes)
    ▪ For these activities, split the group in two (Note: if you have a particularly large group, it may be necessary to split the group four ways. This will require setting up an extra Water Exploration Station as well as an extra Bird Beak Adaptation station.)
    ▪ Again, consult the facilitation guides available for Water Exploration and Bird Beak Adaptation in the “Accompanying Resources” section.
    ▪ Facilitate Water Exploration and Bird Beak Adaptation (20-30 minutes)
      • Half the students will be at one station, and half the students will be at the other.
    ▪ Switch stations
    ▪ Facilitate round two of each activity (20-30 minutes)
  o Depending on the time of day, this can be a nice time to break for lunch, snacks, hydration, sunscreen reapplication, etc. (15-30 minutes)
    ▪ While students are taking a break, gather the materials to build Winogradsky Columns
  o Make Winogradsky Columns (20-30 minutes)
    ▪ A facilitation guide for this activity is available in the “Accompanying Resources” for this document.
  o While students are making Winogradsky Columns can be a great time to clean up the other stations if you haven’t already had the chance.
  o Load up and head out.
BACK ON CAMPUS

- Controlled Reflection
  - Reflection is an essential part of the learning process. After the field trip, find a creative way for students to reflect on what they learned. This could take several forms (get creative!). Perhaps ask students to write several paragraphs about their favorite part of the field trip, about something that surprised them, or about something they learned. You might also ask students to draw a picture representing something they learned. (Note: dependent upon time and attention-span, this reflective element can also take place at the lake as a closing activity for the field trip.)

- Winogradsky Observation
  - Monitor your Winogradsky Columns and see how they change. You may also want to conduct experiments of some sort with the columns. Try placing them in different lighting, temperature ranges, add nutrients, etc.

- Further Learning
  - The Great Salt Lake ecosystem is of great importance to Utah, and it can truly take a lifetime to learn everything there is to know. Explore the Great Salt Lake Institute’s teacher resource page (insert link here) for more activities and curriculum that relates directly to the lake. Many of these activities overlap with required state teaching standards.