

Adopt – A – Section of the D&L Trail – School Program Write Up

Attention schools, if you are looking for a way to engage your students in environmental stewardship or community service the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor has developed a program that may fit your needs. **Adopt-A-Section of the D&L Trail- School Program** allows schools to adopt a section of the D&L Trail near their school for their students to maintain year-round. This program allows small and large groups of all ages to roll up their sleeves and help maintain the environment on their own schedule and in their community.

If you have been looking for programs for your school or organization to be able to experience what community service is, we invite you to reach out to us to learn more.

Program Goal

Adopt a 1 mile stretch of the trail and keep it well maintained with monthly, or near monthly, visits. This includes sign cleaning, litter removal, brush removal, and other “light” tasks as appropriate and able.

Program Logistics Requirements

- The school must appoint one advisor/ point of contact for the D&L to communicate with.
- One advisor must be willing to be formally trained by the D&L and then train any other advisors from their school and their student volunteers.
- The school must commit to one of the program outlines below
 - Full Adoption
 - One School or District adopts a section and agrees to maintain it monthly year round
 - This can be done by splitting the clean ups between schools in the district or different organizations within a school, it does not need to be done by the same group of people each month.
 - Partial Adoption
 - A school cannot commit to the full year of monthly cleanings, so they agree to 3-4 cleanings a year along a specific mile
 - Trial Adoption
 - A school is unsure if they are willing to commit to the program, so they ask to take part in one clean up.
 - This program would not require training ahead of time, training would be done on site, the day of with all participants
 - This program requires a member of the D&L team to be present for the beginning of the day to do the training and get things started
 - The D&L would arrange things with the landowner
- The school is responsible for setting their own schedule and transportation.
- The school must be willing to maintain a relationship and communication with the landowner of their section of the trail. The D&L will introduce the school to the landowner and help facilitate the relationship.
- The school can choose their section of trail to adopt in 1-mile increments.
- The school is responsible for removal of waste at the end of their clean up or scheduling removal of waste with the landowner.

- The school must agree to report the number of hours spent cleaning and bags of trash removed so that we can in turn report to our grant funders.
- The D&L will supply the sign cleaning materials, gloves, and the first supply of garbage bags; the rest of the materials need to be supplied by the school. We do have some non-power tools that can be borrowed by the advisor for cleanup days but need to be returned after they are used.
- Types of Cleanups schools can take part in
 - Basic Clean up - simple trail clean ups which include sign cleaning and small brush removal
 - Second Level Clean ups - Everything listed above plus small tool work such as hand saws for cutting up small trees, or shovels to fill in holes
 - Bonus Activities - Beautification projects
 - Examples
 - putting in a bench
 - putting in a doggie care or bike care station
 - invasive plant removal
 - Plant native plant wild gardens
 - water clean ups.
- Additional Educational Programming Available
 - Kick off assembly
 - We visit the school and offer a 40 minute program outlining the program and training everyone for the first clean up.
 - Field trip attached to a cleanup.
 - We can create an educational experience for your students.
 - This could be historically based or environmentally.
 - It could have to do with a task that you are doing that day such as invasive plants or water pollution or it could be completely separate.
 - There would be a nominal fee attached to this to pay the educator and take care of other incendiary costs

Benefits

- Great resource for organizations with required community service hours
- Good for all ages and most abilities
- Flexible Schedule
- Good for large groups and small groups
- Choice of location
- Great community outreach
- Improved health and wellness for students
 - Physical activity, especially outdoors, has major physical and psychological benefits for individuals.
- Great fit for Environmental, Outdoor, and Community Service clubs
- Great way to give back to the community

- Great way to create community involvement in which families can take part
- Recognition on the D&L's website
- Helps to encourage the use of local outdoor community recreational facilities
- Helps maintain our local eco-tourism
- Creates a sense of community ownership
- Helps protect and maintain clean water sources and the local habitat

Learning Outcomes

- Educate students about what it means to be an environmental steward
- An opportunity to bring biology and environmental classes alive
- Hands on learning about invasive species vs native plants and helping to effect change
- Hands on learning about local ecosystems
- Helps foster an understanding of alternative modes of transportation
- Environmental lessons surrounding clean water sources

Contact

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