



February 2020

Greetings from Tremont!

Welcome as an enrollee in teacher workshop: **Climate Systems: *Effectively communicating about Climate, Air Quality and Energy***. As you can see from the schedule, this will be a busy weekend designed to offer participants a variety of tools to increase confidence in addressing student's misconceptions about climate change, air quality, and biogeochemical cycles that affect all of our lives daily. This workshop will help to easily deconstruct some of the more complex systems and the trends and patterns recorded in relation to atmospheric and biogeochemical sciences. You will leave this workshop better trained to expose your students to these content areas and systems thinking, through practiced experiential education methods that prioritize student driven investigation and modeling.

During your weekend at Tremont you will share the campus with a group taking our Southern Appalachian Naturalist Certification Program: Skills for Sharing Nature, and a small middle school group that will use the Smokies to explore and understand 8th grade content areas. Visit our program page <http://gsmit.org/sanpcp/> learn more about these exciting programs to gain even more specialty skills in southern Appalachian ecology and interpretive techniques. Also, please visit our School Programs page in order to learn about how to bring your students to Tremont for an immersive residential trip <http://gsmit.org/school-college-2/>. We hope this is one of many weekends we will spend together as we seek naturalist skills and knowledge.

This workshop is made possible through support from the National Parks Service and the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

PLEASE READ this letter CAREFULLY! It will help you prepare for your trip:

Learning Outcomes for this workshop:

1. Increased scientific literacy in atmospheric sciences and biogeochemical cycles that will transfer to a wide variety of cross-curricular school-based units and projects
2. Increased skills, methods and materials in a teachers ever-growing 'Teacher Toolkit' to more confidently teach/communicate to learners about these complex topics. Will do this through hands-on practice of Science and Engineering Practices (SEP's) that will empower your students to ask better questions, develop scientific argumentation skills, conduct meaningful investigations, constructing explanations through evidence and developing and using their own models.
3. Increased confidence teaching experientially in the outdoors through personal transformative educational experiences in Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Instructors:

Susan Sachs is the Acting Chief of Resource Education for Great Smoky Mountains National Park. She has been Educational Coordinator for Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center at Purchase Knob and long time Park Ranger for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Apart from leading teacher

workshops focused on hands-on science education, she focuses on integrating park science and education with a focus on creating curriculum-based citizen Science projects for school programs.

Jennie McGuigan is Manager of School Partnerships and Teacher Development at Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (GSMIT) & will be your host for the weekend. She has over 25 years of experience in formal and non-formal classrooms, 8 of those at GSMIT. She focuses much of her time on training the teaching faculty at GSMIT, constructing standards-based curriculum, embedding brain-based pedagogy in programming, and leading teacher workshops that train not only in content, but in dynamic pedagogical routines.

Arrival and Departure:

- Plan to arrive at Tremont on **Friday, Feb. 21st between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m.**
- The program will begin at supper at 6:00 p.m. in our Dining Hall.
- Arriving before 5:00 p.m. will give you the opportunity to check in, move into the dormitory, and take a short stroll or sit by the river before supper before we dive in.
- The program will end around **2:00-2:30 pm on Sunday, Feb. 23rd** please plan accordingly.

Logistics:

- **Please download the pre-visit information.**
<http://gsmi.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/your-visit-to-tremont.pdf> (Your Visit to Tremont contains driving directions, facility information, 'what to pack' and other important information)
- Note that you should **bring your own bedding and towels**, a daypack for gear, well-worn hiking boots or sneakers, and old sneakers in case we get in the stream.
- Please note that **cell phones DO NOT work in the park**, but we have free wireless in the Activity Center, so you can use email to stay connected if you bring a laptop (Note: Wireless is only available in certain spots on campus and is not fast, so do not expect to stream videos).
- **We do have a landline** (yes, they do exist!) located in the Mountain Room of the Activity Center for you use. You will be able to dial out without any charge local and long-distance.

Weather:

- **What to expect** - It may help you to know that over the past five years, that weekend in February has been characterized by an average daily high in the mid-50's° F, and an average daily low in the low 30's° F, here in Walker Valley.
- **Cold** - Come prepared for being outside in the cold! *Tip: Bring more layers than you think you will need, and you'll probably end up bringing just enough. (PLEASE call if you are new to this and need advice)*
- **Waterproof Rain gear is always necessary** here in the Smoky Mountains, and if it does rain, nothing will change about our outdoor field schedule. Be sure to bring it with you!

Diet Restrictions:

- **Food** - If you have special needs (dietary, medical, or otherwise), hopefully you noted this when you filled out your online waiver form (along with your registration). If we do not inform our kitchen staff ahead of time, we may not be able to accommodate you as best as we would like. If something has changed since you filled out your form, please let us know.
- **Snacks and/or personal Beverages** - You are encouraged to bring any snacks or beverages that you need or would just like to bring with you. If you have particular preferences or food allergies you have not made the Tremont kitchen aware of prior to the workshop, it is encouraged to bring those special foods - there are dry and cold storage facilities in the Activity Center (in the Mountain and First Aid Rooms) you can use during your stay. Otherwise prepare to be fed well while you are at Tremont in residence, and our kitchen team would be happy to speak with you in more detail about

your dietary needs - more than likely they will be able to accommodate all of what you need to be healthy and happy.

- Please note that **food is not allowed in the dorm.**

Additional Information to Note:

- **Bring a field journal and journaling supplies** if you have them. We WILL be journaling throughout the workshop, and will provide supplies if you do not have one to bring already. Our curriculum and teaching approach centers around using journals to record information in the field, better focus our observations and share/reflect on in teams.
- **Bring an electronic device** so you and your team members will be able to take notes, explore electronic platforms we will be using and do any additional research while you are in residence.
- **Making yourself at home** is important while you are in residence at Tremont. So be sure to check the **pre-visit information** page at <http://gsmit.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/your-visit-to-tremont.pdf> to understand what to bring and what not to bring. However, if there are games, books, music, fluffy slippers, musical instruments, or other creature comforts that would make your stay more enjoyable, please bring them. If you are not sure, feel free to email Jennie McGuigan at jennie@gsmit.org.
- **Feel free to check out a new article written about Climate in the Smokies:** <https://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/2019/07/the-great-smoky-mountains-iconic-clouds-are-helping-to-protect-the-region-from-climate-change-for-now/>

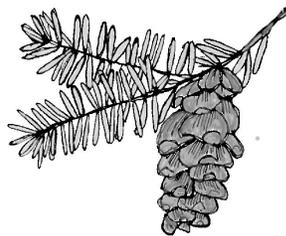
We hope that this information is helpful to you in planning for your upcoming visit to Tremont. If you have further questions, please feel free to call.

Thank you for planning to spend a weekend at Tremont. We are looking forward to meeting many new friends and spending time with returning ones as we explore, enjoy, and learn about Climate Change and Air Quality in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park together.

Sincerely,

Jennie McGuigan
Manager of School Partnerships and Teacher
Development
Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont

Susan Sachs
Acting Chief of Resource Education
Great Smoky Mountains National Park



GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

9275 Tremont Road
Townsend, TN 37882
Phone: 865-448-6709
Fax: 865-448-9250
www.gsmit.org
mail@gsmit.org