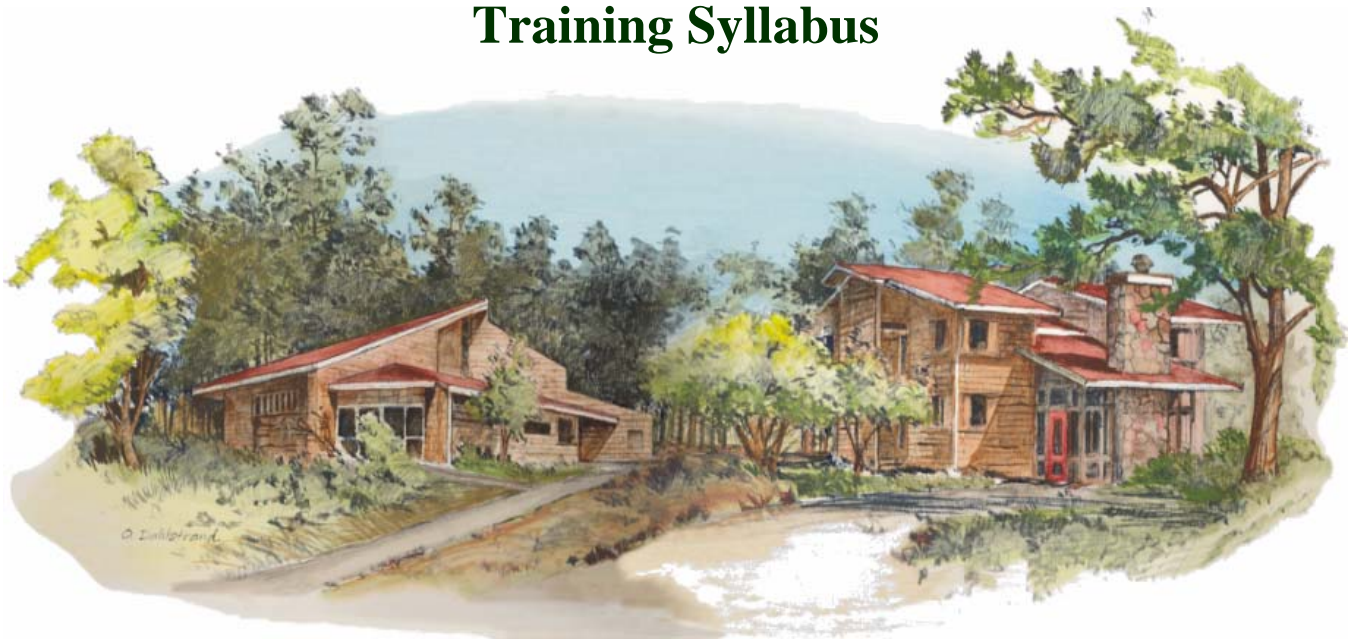


Understanding and Interpreting Deserts

October 28 - November 2, 2007

Training Syllabus



William Penn Mott Jr. Training Center



Memorandum

Date: October 4, 2007

To: Supervisor

From: **Department of Parks and Recreation**
William Penn Mott Jr. Training Center

Subject: Understanding and Interpreting Deserts Group 1

An employee from your office will soon be attending the formal training program described in the attached. Please insure that the employee is fully prepared to attend the session and that the groundwork is laid for the employee's implementation of the training upon returning to work.

You can assist with capturing the full value of the training by taking the following steps:

Prior to Training

1. Make sure that **specific** employee needs are identified and, if necessary, called immediately to the attention of the Training Coordinator.
2. Review with the employee the reason for the employee's attendance.
3. Review objectives and agenda with the employee.
4. Discuss objectives and performance expected after the training.

Immediately Following Attendance

1. Discuss what was learned and intended uses of the training.
2. Review the employee's assessment of the training program for its impact at the workplace and review the due date of the Post-Training Evaluation form.
3. Support the employee's use of the training at the work place.

Prior to Three Months Following Training

1. Employee after discussion with the supervisor login to the Employee Training Management System (ETMS) to complete the Post-Training Evaluation form.
2. Supervisor evaluates the effectiveness of the training on the employee's job performance and login to the ETMS to complete the Training Effectiveness Assessment form.

Thank you for your assistance in seeing that the full benefit of training is realized.



Michael D. Green
Acting Department Training Officer

Attachment

cc: Participant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Formal Training Guidelines	1
Visitor Information – Desert Studies Center “Zzyzx”	4
Program Attendance Checklist.....	6
Post-Training Assignment	8
Agenda.....	10
Program Outline	11
Program	12
Location Map.....	17

***Mission Statement
Training Office***

The mission of the Training Office is to improve organizational and individual performance and productivity through consulting and collaboration, training and human resources development.

TRAINING CENTER STAFF

Michael D. Green Department Training Officer (Acting)
Pat Bost Office Manager
Joanne Danielson Academy Coordinator
Chuck Combs Training Specialist
Sara Skinner Training Specialist
Dave Galanti Training Specialist
Michelle Gardner Cadet Training Officer
Connie Breakfield Cadet Training Officer
Pamela Yaeger Assistant Program Coordinator
Bill Spencer..... Assistant Program Coordinator
Edith Alhambra Assistant Program Coordinator
Summer Kincaid Assistant Program Coordinator
Eric Marks.....Program Assistant

THE MISSION

of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.



FORMAL TRAINING GUIDELINES

Welcome to formal training, an essential component in your career development.

Since 1969, our Department has been providing a continuously changing number of diverse training programs at its main training facility, the William Penn Mott Jr. Training Center, and other locations including Marconi Conference Center and, most recently, the Two Rivers Training Facility in Sacramento. The Department strives to enhance your learning and job performance with formal training of the highest quality.

Our Department's dedication to training is only one aspect of its commitment to you and to the public. This commitment is costly and represents an important investment in you and your career. You and the Department realize a return on that investment by your positive participation in formal training itself and post training follow-through.

The program you will be participating in is described in this training syllabus, which outlines what you can expect from this training and what is expected of you. This syllabus details what you should do before you leave for training; what to do when you arrive; what you will be doing while in training; and, importantly, what you should be able to do when you return to your work site. Specifically:

1. **SYLLABUS:** The syllabus is now accessible on the Employee Training Management System (ETMS). You should print a copy of the syllabus to bring with you to class. Your copy of this syllabus is an important part of your training experience and should be brought with you to training. Read it before you arrive and review it following the program along with material you received at training.
2. **PRE-TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS:** Your completion of pre-training assignments is essential to the success of your training. You are responsible for all reading assignments in preparation for classroom sessions. Time will be provided during working hours to accomplish any assignments which involve either individual or group efforts and resources. (Pre-training assignments are listed in the "Training Attendance Requirements" section.)

3. TRAVEL: Arrange your travel to and from the training through your District or Office. (No reimbursement for travel expense - including per diem costs - will be approved for travel not specifically authorized in advance by the District Superintendent.) Individuals may claim reimbursement for incidental expenses incurred as outlined in DAM 0410.6. The Training Center does not have the capability to provide transportation to/from airport.
4. HOUSING: Housing will be assigned to you on a shared-room basis and will be available from 3:00 p.m. on the date of arrival to 12:00 noon on the date of departure. The Department provides your room and board expenses at Zzyzx only. No per diem allowance will be authorized for living off-grounds. This does not preclude living off-grounds at your own expense. Please advise, Sara M. Skinner, Training Specialist assigned to this program no later than one week before your scheduled arrival if you plan to live off-grounds. No animals are permitted in housing. In the event of an emergency, staff must know your room assignment, therefore, you may not switch rooms without staff approval. Overnight guests are not allowed in the buildings at Zzyzx. Quiet hour for living areas is 10:00 p.m.

HOUSING CANCELLATION POLICY: If you do not need lodging or must change or cancel your reservation, you must contact the Training Center at least 72 hours prior to your date of arrival. The Training Center is committed to ensuring that the reservation that has been made for you is accurate and needed.

5. MEALS: Meals will be provided, semi-cafeteria style, from lunch on the date of arrival through lunch on the date of departure. Box lunches may be provided on some days. If you require a special diet, notify Sara M. Skinner at (831) 649-2961 no later than two weeks before your scheduled arrival.
6. CLOTHING: Field uniforms as found in "Description of Required Field Uniforms", DOM Chapter 2300, Uniform Handbooks, not including optional items, will be worn daily by all uniformed employees during formal training sessions **unless otherwise specified in the Program Attendance Checklist**. Non-uniformed employees shall wear professional business attire.

Because we are on grounds with many other groups, and the image we project as State Park employees is important not only during working hours but off duty hours as well, your informal sportswear should be appropriate.

7. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: Participants shall not possess or consume alcoholic beverages in common areas.
8. SMOKING: Smoking is not permitted in the classrooms or in any lodge or guest room.
9. REGISTRATION: After class on Monday you may register at Zzyzx for your room assignment. If you require vegetarian meals, notify Sara M. Skinner at least two weeks prior.
10. COURSE LEADERS: The formal training you will attend is developed and, for the most part, conducted by experienced State Park employees in field and staff positions. Some courses will be conducted by qualified instructors from other agencies and educational institutions. Your course leaders have proven their ability and knowledge in their profession, and provide a level of expertise difficult to match.
11. TRAINING CENTER STAFF: A Training Center staff member has been assigned responsibility for your training group as well as for your training program. That staff member usually serves as a Course Leader as well as a Coordinator. During the program, you may be asked to assist Training Center staff in the logistics of your training program (organizing field trip transportation, supervising classroom breaks, etc.). Center staff will do all within their power to make your training experience pleasant and meaningful.
12. TRAINING MATERIALS: May be made available to you at your unit. Handout materials issued at your unit should be brought to training for possible use. A conference binder or notebook will be issued to you at the training session for note taking and convenience in handling materials. Bring your own pens and pencils.
13. ATTENDANCE: Regular attendance is a critical course requirement and your participation is important to the success of this training. All absences, except those of an emergency nature, must be approved in advance by the Training Specialist.
14. CELL PHONES: As a courtesy to your fellow participants and course leaders ensure that your cell phone is turned off during classes. Participants should not be receiving or making cell phone calls during class time. Please limit those calls to your breaks.
15. POST-TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS: In connection with formal training are to be completed under the direction of your supervisor. See "Program Attendance Requirements" in this syllabus.
16. COFFEE BREAK REFRESHMENTS: Will be available throughout each session at the Center. You will be asked to contribute to the "Hospitality Fund" to defray expenses. Please bring your own coffee cup.

Visitor Information- Desert Studies Center “Zzyzx”

Please review the following information before your visit, and bring it with you to the Center, should you need to refer to the directions or phone numbers listed.

Directions to the Desert Studies Center

The Desert Studies Center is located in the Mojave National Preserve near Baker, California. Those coming from most of Southern California will take Interstate 15 to Barstow; from Northern and Central California, take Highway 58 from Bakersfield to Barstow. From Barstow, take I-15 towards Las Vegas to the Zzyzx Road Exit (about 60 miles) and turn right. Those coming through Las Vegas, Nevada, will take I-15 about 90 miles to the Zzyzx Road Exit (about 6 miles past Baker) and turn left. Once on Zzyzx Road, a short section of pavement will turn onto a graded dirt road. Follow this road about 4 miles to its end at the Desert Studies Center. Once at the Center, park and make contact with the Manager for orientation and room assignment (if necessary go to the office door and page him). Members of classes visiting the Center are asked to arrive with or after their instructors; those arriving early may be asked to wait until their instructor arrives. If you cannot arrive at the Center before 10 p.m., you must call the Manager at the number listed below.

What to Bring to the Desert Studies Center

Essential Items:

Sleeping bag, blankets and sheets
Pillow
Flashlight, spare bulb, batteries
Boot or sturdy walking shoes
Toilet articles and towel
Winter: layered clothing and gloves

Desirable Items:

Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat
Refillable water container
Binoculars, hand lens and camera
Alarm clock
Extra set of car keys
Summer: bathing suit and sandals
First aid kit

Some visitors will want to consider bringing field guides and reference materials, maps, specialized laboratory or field equipment, field safety items, and instructional materials such as videotapes, software, and overhead transparencies. The nearest sources of dry goods and automotive supplies are in Baker where prices are high and selection is limited. Plan to bring any extra supplies you anticipate needing or purchasing them en route.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, or need to contact the Center, call (714) 936-0461 (Manager's cell phone). Other numbers which may be useful:

Emergency Services - 911
AAA (800) 400-4222
A-1 Towing (Baker) (760) 733-4380
Mojave National Preserve (760) 255-8800
Desert Information Center (Park Service) (760) 733-4040
BLM/NPS Ranger Dispatch (909) 383-5651
CA Highway Patrol (760) 256-1727
San Bernardino County Sheriff (760) 256-1796

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE CHECKLIST

To assist you in preparation for formal training at Desert Studies Center, Zzyzx, the following list is provided:

1. Read and understand the Understanding and Interpreting Deserts syllabus before arrival at Zzyzx.
2. Arrange your travel through your District/Unit Office.
 - a. Please note that the training starts at 1300 on Monday, October 29, 2007. Check-in for housing will be after class on Monday. There will not be housing available Sunday night at Zzyzx. If you need housing Sunday night, please contact Sara M. Skinner at (831) 649-2961.
3. Complete the following pre-training assignments prior to arrival to training:
 - a. Review the Post-Training Assignment page in this syllabus with your supervisor.
 - b. Visit the Desert Studies Center website. Please click on each of the following links and review the information: About, Location, Climate, Facilities, Safety, Student, and Image Gallery. Please pay special attention to the "Student" and "Facilities" links. The new website can be viewed at <http://biology.fullerton.edu/dsc/>.
 - c. Read the "Visitor Information- Desert Studies Center, Zzyzx" on page 4 of this syllabus.
 - d. Bring a camera (digital or film), if you do not own one you may bring a disposable camera with you.
4. Remember to bring the following with you to training:
 - Understanding and Interpreting Deserts syllabus
 - Alarm clock
 - Pens and pencils
 - Pre-training assignments
 - Optional: binoculars
 - Coffee cup and/or refillable water bottles
 - Essential items as listed on the "Visitor Information- Desert Studies Center, Zzyzx" list within this syllabus

5. Uniforms are not required for this program. However, when packing your suitcase please consider we represent the Department when in class and during on-site visits:
 - We will do some walking both in and outdoors, please bring suitable shoes and clothing.

6. Optional Evening Activity: If you wish to participate in the evening activity, please bring the following with you and notify Sara M. Skinner by October 24, 2007 that you wish to participate:
 - A pumpkin (or the like to carve)
 - Prizes for the most unique thing to carve and most creative carving will be awarded
 - Carving tools
 - A decent costume to wear
 - A trick and a treat (for the whole group)

If you have questions or need assistance, contact Sara M. Skinner, Training Specialist:

Phone: 831-649-2961
Fax: 831-649-2824
Email: sskinner@parks.ca.gov

POST-TRAINING ASSIGNMENT

Prior to ninety days after the completion of this program, the employee and his/her supervisor should sit down and discuss the impact and assess the effectiveness this program has had on the employee. Then both the supervisor and employee should login to the Employee Training Management System (ETMS) and complete the Post-Training Evaluation form (an email will be sent to both employee and supervisor notifying them that the evaluation needs to be completed).

The post-training evaluation process is intended to provide a bridge between classroom instruction and the on-the-job application of training. The information obtained through this process will assist the training participant, supervisor, and Training Center in providing a return on the investment the Department has on training.

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING DESERTS GROUP 1 – AGENDA
October 29, 2007 - November 2, 2007

Monday

October 29

1200-1300	Lunch-Zzyzx	All
1300-1330	Welcome, Course Introductions, Announcements	Cahill/Skinner
1330-1515	Introduction to the Natural History and Geography of California Deserts	Schoenherr
1515-1645	Vegetation and Flora of the California Deserts	Schoenherr
1645-1700	Questions and Wrap-Up	All
1700-	Registration: <i>(Check-in at Zzyzx main desk)</i>	All

Tuesday

October 30

0800-1700	Field Trip to Kelso Railroad Station Visitor Center and Dunes	Schneider
	Discuss Cultural History of the California Deserts	Schoenherr/Johnson/Werminski
1930-	Optional - Set Trapline for Morning Analysis	

Wednesday

October 31

0800-0900	Discuss, Photograph, Release Critters from Traps	Schoenherr
0900-1045	Wildlife of the California Deserts	Schoenherr
1045-1200	Geology and Paleontological Overview of California Deserts	Jefferson
1200-1300	Lunch	
1300-1500	Changing Faces of the Desert	Schneider
1500-1700	Interpreting Cultural Resources	Schneider
1900-TBA	Optional Evening Activity: Haunts and Howls	

Thursday

November 1

0800-1200	Cultural Resource Field Trip to Sites Near Zzyzx	All
1200-1300	Lunch	All
1300-1400	Interpreting the Ordinary	Werminski
1400-1700	Photographic Seeing	Johnson

Friday

November 2

0800-0930	Interpreting the Desert on an Old Fashioned Nature Walk	Johnson
0930-1000	Literature of the California Deserts	Werminski

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING DESERTS GROUP 1 – AGENDA
October 29, 2007 - November 2, 2007

Friday

November 2

1000-1100

The Art of Seeing: Desert Phenomena

Bier

1100-1140

Panel Discussion - Putting it All Together

Werminski

1140-1200

Site and Facility Clean-up, Course Evaluations

All

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING DESERTS

32 HOURS

PROGRAM OUTLINE

<u>WELCOME AND WRAP-UP</u>	1.75
Welcome, Course Introductions, Announcements, Wrap-up.....	
Panel Discussion-Putting it All Together	
<u>INTRODUCTION TO DESERTS</u>	1.5
Introduction to the Natural History and Geography of California Deserts.....	
<u>FIELD STUDIES</u>	12.0
Field Trip to Kelso Railroad Station Visitor Center and Dunes	
Discuss and Interpret Cultural History California Deserts	
Cultural Resources Field Trip to Sites Near Zzyzx	
<u>INTERPRETATION AND PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES</u>	16.75
Vegetation and Flora of the California Deserts.....	
Discuss, Photograph, Release Critters from Traps	
Wildlife of the California Deserts	
Geology and Paleontological Overview of California Deserts	
Changing Faces of the Desert.....	
Interpreting Cultural Resources.....	
Interpreting the Ordinary	
Photographic Seeing	
Interpreting the Desert on an Old Fashioned Nature Walk.....	
Literature of the California Deserts.....	
The Art of Seeing: Desert Phenomena.....	
TOTAL HOURS	32

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING DESERTS

WELCOME, COURSE INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, WRAP-UP

Purpose: Participants will meet each other and the program coordinators, review program content, and share expectations. Class registration materials will be completed.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Review course content, procedure, grading, and evaluation process.
2. Adhere to all Training Center Guidelines.

INTRODUCTION TO THE NATURAL HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF CALIFORNIA DESERTS

Purpose: Introduce participants to the history and geography of the California Desert.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Describe the climate and weather of each of California's desert regions.
2. Recognize boundaries between California's deserts and be able to locate each of California's deserts on a map.
3. List the ecological factors responsible for a desert.

FIELD TRIP TO KELSO RAILROAD STATION VISITOR CENTER AND DUNES AND CULTURAL RESOURCE FIELD TRIP TO SITES NEAR ZZYZX

Purpose: To visit sites within the desert community with the intent to gain first hand experience and interpretive knowledge.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Explain the distribution of plants and animals with respect to plant communities, slope aspect, and soils.
2. Recognize indicator plants for plant communities and animals that are encountered.

VEGETATION AND FLORA OF THE CALIFORNIA DESERTS

Purpose: To study the types of vegetation and flora that are present in the desert and why they grow there.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Recognize plant communities associated with each desert.
2. Describe vagaries of climate, weather, and soils responsible for different plant communities.
3. Recognize indicator plants for each community and how they are adapted to their environment.
4. List overall strategies of desert plants for survival in a desert climate.

DISCUSS, PHOTOGRAPH, RELEASE CRITTERS FROM TRAPS AND WILDLIFE OF THE CALIFORNIA DESERTS

Purpose: To study the different animals that live in the desert.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Recognize, identify, and photograph some common desert mammals.
2. Identify the basic strategies of animals for survival in a desert climate.
3. Recognize common desert animals and explain how they are adapted to desert survival.
4. Observe various habitats and predict what animals are likely to occur there.

GEOLOGY AND PALEONTOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF CALIFORNIA DESERTS

Purpose: To introduce paleontology and its' components to the participants.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Identify fossils as prehistoric natural resources to be protected, studied, and interpreted.
2. Describe paleontologic resources in desert parks, geologic time, vanished landscapes, and extinct biotas.

3. Demonstrate methods of interpreting the paleontologic record.

CHANGING FACES OF THE DESERT AND INTERPRETING CULTURAL RESOURCES

Purpose: Introduce participants to the cultural resources and changes that take place in the desert and how to interpret those resources.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Identify how humans interacted with desert environments over time.
2. List the differences and similarities between prehistoric, historical, and modern human interactions with desert environments.
3. Describe how the unique characteristics of the desert environment have meanings for humans in terms of immense view sheds, wilderness experiences, significant and sacred landscapes, plant, and animal resources, opportunities for celestial observance, and isolation from modern urban noise backgrounds.
4. Trainees will gain expertise in presenting the above subjects to the public in interpretive encounters that will focus on the values that the desert has embodied in the past and embodies in the present.

INTERPRETING THE ORDINARY

Purpose: To demonstrate the interpretive potential of common place phenomena.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Describe an awareness of common but often overlooked phenomena.
2. Define physical explanations for the phenomena discussed.
3. Identify that valuable interpretive opportunities exist in any situation.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SEEING

Purpose: To practice using cameras to capture photos for use in interpretive programs.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. List the environmental conditions necessary to convert a pretty or interesting subject into a successful photograph.
2. Manipulate camera controls to produce a desired effect in the photograph.
3. Identify the best position from which to photograph a subject, so that it will have the most impact, drama, or other desired effect.
4. Describe the difference between a subject, which will work as a successful photograph, and similar subjects which will not work.

INTERPRETING THE DESERT ON AN OLD-FASHIONED NATURE WALK

Purpose: To observe techniques used to capture audiences and engage participants on a nature walk, incorporating the instruction from the week.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Describe survival adaptations of plants and animals so that the target audience relates personally to the adaptation and finds it easy to understand.
2. Demonstrate techniques that draw audience members to the subject and hold their attention.
3. Identify potential opportunities for enhanced interpretation and use them to their advantage during the walk.

LITERATURE OF THE CALIFORNIA DESERTS

Purpose: To acquaint participants with the rich and varied literature of the California deserts.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Name at least five authors of desert literature and recognize their work.
2. Identify the evolution of attitudes toward the desert as expressed in writings.
3. Describe the value of desert literature as an interpretive resource.

THE ART OF SEEING: DESERT PHENOMENA

Purpose: This session will serve as a basic introduction to the many atmospheric, geologic, and biologic events, known as desert phenomena. By recognizing and observing these events you increase your “desert senses” and your observation skills, and become more in tune with the desert environment.

Performance Objectives: By the close of the session the participant will

1. Recognize many types of desert phenomena.
2. List when and where to find them.
3. Practice and increase their desert observation skills.



Directions to Desert Studies Center

The California State University, Desert Studies Center is located between Barstow and Las Vegas at Soda Springs in California (60 miles east of Barstow, eight miles southwest of Baker). To reach the Center, take I-15 (the Mojave Freeway) to Zzyzx Road. Drive south on Zzyzx Road four miles to the Center. Zzyzx Road is unpaved for most of its length, but is graded and should be driven slowly.