The 2012 River of Grass Canoe Expedition

Goal

An ‘Expedition’ is a journey with a purpose. The Arthur R. Marshall Foundation’s River of Grass Canoe Expedition began in January 2010 with the purpose of tracing the flow of water from the mouth of the Kissimmee River in Lake Okeechobee, to the Grassy Waters Preserve in West Palm Beach. A team of paddlers was chosen to journey 78 miles over 6 days and 5 nights, to examine Everglades issues and bring attention to the relationship between the people of South Florida and our natural environment. Now into its third year and third leg of the journey, the 2012 Expedition will paddle from the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Palm Beach County to Tamiami Trail from January 18-24, 2012.

Classroom Connection

An important component of the Expedition has been the connection between the paddlers and students. In 2010, the Foundation wanted to share the excitement of that first Expedition, as well as the valuable information to teachers and classrooms in South Florida, and farther. Several schools were invited to ‘adopt’ a canoe. These classes ranging from Elementary to High School developed a list of questions concerning the Expedition and the Everglades that they wished to learn about. The paddlers that they ‘adopted’ served as their researchers while on the Expedition, finding answers to the student’s questions. Written answers were delivered to classes at the end of the trip as well as during live web broadcasts directly from the field!

Thanks to a partnership with the Palm Beach County School District, the paddlers were able to broadcast remotely from the Everglades. This live feed was distributed online by the Palm Beach County School District — and viewers from locations around the state and the country were able to join in. Teachers could log-in through internet access to a secure, monitored School District web site to view maps, photos and the live session for their class to view. Paddlers were able to speak directly to the students who had ‘adopted’ their canoe and supply answers and direct observations to their questions. Thanks to the chat feature, teachers could post new questions directly to the paddlers for their response. Both the instructors and their students were able to take part in the Expedition from the safety and comfort of the classroom. The broadcast was recorded and available online for teachers to show to classes later in the day.
Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

Science
Big Idea 1: The Practice of Science (many standards are addresses by discussing observations, investigations, collecting information using the senses, inference based on observation,
SC.1.L.14.2: Make observations of living things and their environment using the 5 senses
SC.2.E.7.5: State the importance of planning for severe weather and other weather related events
SC.3.L.17.1: Describe how animals and plants respond to changing seasons
SC.4.E.6.6: Identify resources available in Florida
SC.4.L.17.4: Recognize ways plants and animals, including humans, can impact the environment
SC.5.L.17.1: Compare and contrast adaptations displayed by various animals and plants that enable them to survive...
SC.7.L.17.3: Describe and investigate various limiting factors in the local ecosystem and their impact on native populations...
SC.8.N.4.1: Explain that science is one of the processes that can be used to inform decision making at the community, state, national and international levels.

Social Studies
SS.K.G.3.2: Identify basic bodies of water
SS.1.G.1.1: Use physical and political/cultural maps to locate places in Florida
SS.2.A.1.1: Examine primary and secondary sources
SS.2.E.1.1: Recognize that people make choices because of limited resources
SS.3.G.2.4: Describe the physical features of the United States
SS.4.A.1.: Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant events throughout Florida history
SS.4.A.4.1: Explain the effects of technological advances on Florida
SS.4.G.1.3: Explain how weather impacts Florida
SS.4.C.2.1: Discuss public issues in Florida that impact the daily lives of citizens
SS.7.G.2.2: Locate major physical landmarks that are emblematic of the United States (Everglades)
SS.7.G.5.1: Use a map to geographically represent current information about issues of conservations or ecology in the local community
SS.8.G.5.2: Describe the impact of human modifications on the physical environment and ecosystems of the United States through history

For more information about the 2012 River of Grass Canoe Expedition please contact the Arthur R. Marshall Foundation
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