



oklahoma alliance for geographic education (OKAGE)
department of geography
sarkeys Energy Center
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019
Tel: (405) 325-5832
Fax: (405) 325-8781

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Media Contact: Brooke Barnett, OKAGE Communications Coordinator

Email: bbarnett@ou.edu

Phone: 405.325.5832 or 405.401.0687

Toll free: 1.800.522.8462 ext 5832

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDUCATORS TO EXPLORE CULTURES, WARS, AND SETTLEMENTS ON THE SOUTHERN PLAINS

Beginning this weekend, a group of Oklahoma educators will explore the Antelope Hills, Palo Duro Canyon, Adobe Walls, Black Mesa, the Rio Grande Gorge, and many other sites on the Great Plains during a two-week field expedition known as the Lodge Pole River Project. This research-based expedition marks the beginning of the second year of the project, an effort of the Oklahoma Alliance for Geographic Education (OKAGE) at the University of Oklahoma. The Lodge Pole River Project is an educational initiative focusing on the cultures, wars, and settlements of the Southern Plains, and is funded by the National Geographic Education Foundation.

The Lodge Pole River Project, Part Two will be a joint venture between OKAGE, the Comanche Nation, the National Park Service, and the Fort Sill Historical Museum, with the goal of developing educational and outreach materials on the Comanche Nation, the Red River Wars, and the Fort Sill National Historic Site near Lawton.

“The Lodge Pole Project will connect the present to the past, and help students develop a better understanding of events and people from many perspectives and time frames,” explains Rebecca W. Scott, OKAGE Coordinator. “During this summer’s institute, we will explore the Comanche culture, intertribal relationships, the impact of the U.S. Army, and the beginning of the reservation years on the Southern Plains.”

Twenty Oklahoma educators, tribal representatives, and resource personnel will participate in the project. [See list below]

“During the summer expedition, the route of travel will take us through western Oklahoma, the plains and Front Range of Colorado, the High Plains and Sangre de Cristo areas of New Mexico, and the Llano Estacado and canyons of the Texas Panhandle,” explains Jim Goodman, Field Coordinator for the project. “Along this path, we will make stops in many places, including Denver, Taos, Santa Fe, several New Mexican Pueblos, Palo Duro Canyon, and Adobe Walls.”

In July, institute participants will spend a week in the Fort Sill area near Lawton, Oklahoma developing curriculum and educational materials. These materials will be available online and through teacher training workshops in 2004.

The Lodge Pole River Project Part Two is funded by the Grosvenor Grant program, which supports geography education projects that provide professional development for teachers and develop models for innovative practices in the classroom. As part of the National Geographic Education Foundation’s goal to help students understand the world around them, the Grosvenor Grant funds programs on a state level that increase student knowledge about political, physical, human, cultural, economic, and political geography.

OKAGE is a non-profit educational outreach program affiliated with the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the National Geographic Society, and is housed in the Department of Geography at the University of Oklahoma. For more information about OKAGE, please visit the OKAGE Web site at www.ou.edu/okage.

Participating Teachers, Tribal Representatives, and Resource Personnel:

1. Bob Ehrle – Lewis & Clark Middle School, Tulsa Public Schools (Tulsa, OK)
2. Charlotte Gooday – Riverside Indian School (Anadarko, OK)
3. Jim Goodman - OKAGE Field Coordinator (Santa Fe, NM)
4. Mary Goodman - OKAGE Assistant Field Coordinator (Santa Fe, NM)
5. Paula Haight - Barnard Elementary School, Tulsa Public Schools (Tulsa, OK)
6. Pam Haines - Stillwater High School, Stillwater Public Schools (Stillwater, OK)
7. Doug Hurt – Stephen F. Austin State University, Geography Department (Nacodoches, TX)
8. Pat Jim - Riverside Indian School (Anadarko, OK)
9. Betty Keim - Richard Kane Elementary, Bartlesville Public Schools (Bartlesville, OK)
10. Richard Keim - Dewey Middle School, Dewey Public Schools (Dewey, OK)
11. Denise Lapeyrouse - Merritt Middle School, Elk City Public Schools (Elk City, OK)
12. Jayne Marley - Roland Jr. High School, Roland Public Schools (Roland, OK)
13. Carolyn Matthews - Tulsa County Conservation District, (Tulsa, OK)
14. Robby McMurtry - Morris Public Schools (Morris, OK)
15. Geneva Navarro - Comanche Nation (Lawton, OK)
16. Rebecca Scott - OKAGE Coordinator (Norman, OK)
17. Lenniel Sovo - Elgin Middle School, Elgin Public Schools (Elgin, OK)
18. Jennifer Stephens - Cheyenne Middle School, Edmond Public Schools (Edmond, OK)
19. Larry Vandiver - Sapulpa Middle School, Sapulpa Public Schools, (Sapulpa, OK)
20. Bill Voelker, Comanche Nation (Cyril, OK)

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