

## Overnight Program Ideas for Centers w/o Residential Facilities

Participants: John Gallagher (Stokes Nature Center, UT), Sarah Gilbert & Jason Nally (E. KY PRIDE), Larry MacGahee & Karyn (The Outdoor's School, PA), Matt Kauffman (Centers for Nature Education, NY), Jennifer Rinio (Oracle, AZ)

### **Key Questions:**

How could a center transition from day use to overnight use?

How can you provide off-site overnight programs?

Is it effective and sustainable to use other residential facilities for housing, while your organization provides programming?

### **Discussion:**

Larry discussed at length the Teen Adventure Program, an adventure based camp for inner city kids. This program takes groups of 12 teenagers (w/ 3 adult naturalists), which have been a part of the centers past summer residential program, on 12 day trips around the Northeast. They camp at campgrounds in tents, and contract outfitters to lead adventure activities (rock climbing, whitewater rafting, and whale watching).

Matt discussed the Teen EcoTrek program which is very similar to Teen Adventure Program. Teens spend one day at center onsite, spend a night at a campground, engage in adventure activities w/ outside outfitters, and spend two days backpacking in the Adirondack High Peaks.

Sarah and John discussed their overnight programs where they rent out other environmental ed. residential facilities (like 4H camps) to house groups, but provide.

Jenn discussed potential for increased use by opening the site up to overnight use by scout groups and other outside groups. Groups could camp out w/ their own gear. State Park rangers currently run bug, scorpion, and astronomy programs at night, and these programs could attract more visitors if they were staying overnight onsite.

### **Getting Gear:**

Pro-deals are hard to get but, Karyn discussed tips for fundraising. Make your appeal unique, utilize local businesses, and relationships through board members or community. Donated goods from organizations (such as Appalachian Trail Club) can be another option. Providing gear to fully outfit groups to avoid conflicts between kids who own their own gear, and those using (sometimes rundown) rental gear.

### **Risk Management:**

Outside groups using your facility *must* provide certificates of insurance. Outside contracts should be checked on to make sure they meet industry standards. Have waivers signed before hand for activities done with outfitters and for activities done with your center.

Selecting Participants:

Participants can be selected from an existing program where they have been evaluated and chosen as a candidate. Participants could be families. Applications with written responses required.