



for STUDENTS

What is MCDOWELL?

McDowell Environmental Center (MEC) is an overnight camp where you will learn school subjects in an outdoor classroom. It is located on Highway 195, about 13 miles north of Jasper.

McDowell has 1100 acres of forest, streams, sandstone canyons, fields and lots of wildlife.

McDowell Environmental Center is an “extension” of your school classroom. When you come to McDowell you will be taking hands-on classes that focus on many subjects you are taking in school. The “lead teacher” from your school will choose the classes that you take while you are here.

You will be taught by one of our Instructors who will lead you through the woods, in the pond or across the swinging bridge and teach you about connections between humankind and the natural world.

THE FIRST DAY:

When you arrive at Camp one of our staff will jump on your bus and give you instructions about where to unload and then will escort you to your cabins! You will be staying with 8-9 other students and 1-2 adults from your school (either teachers or chaperones). You will also be working in small groups of 12-15 in the daytime.

Your daytime group is called a “field group” and all field groups have special names. You will find out what your group name will be on the first day. Examples of some group names are: Wood Ducks, Little Brown Bats, Osprey, Bobcats, Dragonflies, Great Blue Herons, Green Salamanders, American Crows, River Otters, Barred Owls, etc.

You will also learn about our special rules at Camp. Although please keep in mind that all rules you have at school and in your classroom will also be here because your teachers are coming with you.

Once you learn your special field group name our Instructors will go through the schedule of the week with you. You will learn which classes you will be taking, in the daytime and at night as well as other important things to remember. You will also be given a wood-cookie nametag that you can keep.

You will begin your first class with your field group after lunch. This first afternoon class is from 1:00-4:00 and then everyone breaks for “canteen or snack time”. Once snack time is over you will get to choose which recreation activities you want to participate in (examples: fishing, field games, shelter building, hikes, building sandcastles, storytelling, eco-jeopardy, etc.)

CABINS:

Each cabin is a sturdy, clean, and well-maintained cement-block cabin with about 11 single beds (no bunk beds). The cabins hold about 9-10 students and 1-2 adults. All cabins are heated and have an attic fan in the bathroom for cooling. Each cabin has a bathroom with 2 sinks, 2 toilets, and 2 individual showers.

The adults from your school will establish the following: shower times, lights out time, no raiding, respecting other students’ belongings, keeping their area clean, etc. In the evening, you are not allowed to leave the cabin. Please remember to be respectful when staying in the cabins: be sure to turn off the lights if you are the last one to leave.

FOOD and MEALS:

Meal times are also educational opportunities at McDowell. We stress the importance of no food waste and using good manners by eating family-style. Our Dining Hall serves nutritious, kid-friendly meals.

We ask that you do not send have any additional food in your cabin as it may attract “critters” to the cabins. You will sit in small groups in the dining hall and will have the chance to help with setting of tables, assisting others in clean up of the table and sweeping (this helps encourage responsibility and community living while at camp). Some examples of meals at camp MAY include;

Chicken fingers with mashed potatoes, green beans and homemade rolls,

Pizza with corn and salad,

Ravioli with grilled cheese sandwiches and salad

Chicken sandwiches with pears, tater tots and salad

Eggs with bacon and grits and homemade biscuits

All Lunch and Dinner meals will have a fresh salad available. Sweet tea and coffee are for adults only.

SAFETY AND MEDICATIONS:

It is important that you stay safe while you are here at Camp McDowell.

Please be sure to bring a water bottle and be sure to drink from it, always travel with a buddy wherever you go, stay on the trail, respect others.

If you take medication you will need to travel with a buddy to see the nurse during the designated times.

STUDENT PREPARATION:

To be prepared for outdoor education, please pack the things written on the Bring Along list. The most important thing to bring is a water bottle and warm clothes. Remember that if you are coming during April, May, September or October it may still be hot and so sunscreen is important.

CLASSES:

We offer 20 different classes here at the Environmental Center. Your teacher will choose the classes all students will be taking, based on their goals for the visit. All classes are correlated with the Alabama Course of Study for Science and Social Studies. The classes at McDowell Environmental Center are hands-on and take place rain or shine. If there is “inclement” weather classes occur indoors (severe rainstorms, thunderstorms, etc.).

Please remember to bring rain gear with you!

CANTEEN / RECREATION:

If you would like to bring money to spend at the souvenir store, you can buy the following items:

\$2—I love Camp McDowell bracelet	\$8—Disposable camera	\$10—Hat
\$4—I love Camp McDowell shoelaces	\$8--\$10—McDowell Environmental Center Water bottle	\$12-\$20—T-shirt

Typical SCHEDULE for at 3 day stay:

<u>Day One</u>		<u>Day Two</u>		<u>Day Three</u>	
10:00	Arrive, settle into cabins	7:55	Breakfast	7:30	Cabin Clean-up
10:45	Welcome Meeting	8:45	Morning Class	7:55	Breakfast
11:45	Lunch	noon	Lunch	8:45	Morning Class
1:00	Afternoon Class	1:00	Afternoon Class	noon	Lunch
4:10	Canteen	4:10	Canteen	11:15	Sharing Circle
4:30	Recreation Time	4:30	Recreation Time	1:00	Depart
5:40	Dinner	5:40	Dinner		

7:15	Evening Program	7:00	Evening Program
8:30	Snack	8:30	Snack
10:00	Suggested Lights Out	10:00	Suggested Lights Out