



## Featured Site: San Joaquin River Gorge

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) San Joaquin River Gorge consists of approximately 6,700 acres of BLM and Bureau of Reclamation lands. Located in Auberry, California, the area is managed by BLM via interagency agreement. The area ranges in elevation from 750 feet to over 2,200 feet and is bisected by one of the state's largest rivers. It is an ecological transition zone from the great Central Valley to the Sierra Nevada. This area is diverse geographically, and geologically, resulting in a unique blend of plants, wildlife, habitats and a rich legacy of prehistoric and historic cultural sites. The area is also in the heart of the wildland-urban interface, and as one of California's largest and most embattled rivers, the San Joaquin has quite a story to tell in regards to historic and contemporary struggles over water and hydro-power issues.



San Joaquin River Gorge works with over 6,000 students each year in a variety of natural and cultural resource programs. The most popular and requested program is the Grub Gulch re-enactment. Site staff dress in costume to recreate the 1880s gold mining town of Grub Gulch. Students are encouraged to come in costume as well. The program takes place on the Fresno River parcel which is 160 acres of BLM land northwest of the San Joaquin River Gorge.



Students participate in activities at three stations. They file claims on land at the General Land Office, use a crosscut saw to learn about life as a lumberjack, and pan for gold on a real placer mining claim. At lunchtime, students are treated to BLM's guitar pickin' geologist, Dr. Gregg Wilkerson, singing historic tunes of the day. Students also get to sample foods of the 1880s such as hardtack, dried meats and fruits, and 'switchel' a drink made of water cider and molasses. They learn that, because of the brackish water homesteaders had available to them, it was necessary to sweeten the water! In order to host approximately 70 students per session, the Grub Gulch program utilizes several volunteers from the local area. Look for several related lesson plans to be posted to the HOL website in the coming months.

San Joaquin River Gorge also hosts Project Archaeology teacher workshops. In only its first year, the program is in demand by teachers statewide.

To learn more about these and other programs at San Joaquin River Gorge, contact Tracy Rowland, [Tracy.Rowland@ca.blm.gov](mailto:Tracy.Rowland@ca.blm.gov) or visit the Hands on the Land website [www.handsontheland.org](http://www.handsontheland.org).

## Member News

### Welcome to New Members

Hands on the Land is excited to welcome its newest members to the network:

Modoc National Wildlife Refuge, California  
 Atwell Island, BLM, California  
 Desert Discovery Center, BLM, California  
 Appalachian National Scenic Trail, NPS, West Virginia  
 Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona  
 Empire Ranch, BLM, Arizona

To learn more about these sites and all of the HOL sites around the country, visit the website and click on 'Site Profile.' With every new site enrolled, the HOL network is enriched with experienced educators and program providers along with useful teaching resources. HOL is currently in the process of enrolling several new sites so be sure to check the Site Profile page frequently!

## Web Corner

### Posting Artwork and Photographs

Share your student's artwork and photographs on the HOL website. Students love seeing their work on the web! The HOL website can accept photos up to 70KB. Follow these easy steps:

1. On the Hands on the Land home page, click on 'Admin Hub'.
2. Login to the Admin Hub using your username and password.
3. Click on 'Post Student Artwork and Photography'.
4. Enter the appropriate information and click 'Post it!'
5. Contact webmaster Dave Zelenka with any questions. [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#)



**Forest fire season is upon us.** Hands on the Land has several resources on Fire. Visit the Hot Topics page and click Fire to find useful information for your programs.

## Upcoming Events

### Hands on the Land Awards

Partners in Resource Education (PRE) is seeking to increase visibility for Hands on the Land through the use of the HOL logo and the tag line: "Hands on the Land...linking students, parents and teachers to their public lands." Sites are encouraged to use this theme in promoting their participation in HOL.



PRE announces an expanded awards program to reinforce the connections. Last year sites were commended for overall excellence in meeting goals of the program. This year PRE is asking site managers to self-nominate their sites for special recognition in one or more of three categories:

**Collaboration:** How has your site worked with others to meet HOL goals of connecting students, parents and teachers to the land? Collaboration could be within the community or with other HOL sites. Please be specific in describing collaborative endeavors. News clippings or website references are encouraged.

**Web resources:** How does your site promote its work on the web? Please identify specific postings, including teacher resources, student work, curriculum development—those web resources that are unique to your site.

**Recruiting and/or mentoring new sites:** How has your HOL site helped expand the program through recruiting and/or mentoring a new site? Based on your experience, what advice can you offer other sites interested in joining the network?

Please submit your entry of up to 300 words per category to Ellen Reid at The Keystone Center by July 28, 2006. You can use e-mail: [ereid@keystone.org](mailto:ereid@keystone.org) or mail to The Keystone Center, 1628 Sts. John Rd, Keystone, CO 80435.

Awards will be announced on National Public Lands Day, September 30, 2006. Please indicate if your site is interested in participating in this annual day of learning and volunteering on public lands.