

Green River Preserve ~ Staff Covenant



A covenant is a solemn promise or agreement. The purpose of this covenant is to formally agree to our community standards of behavior. The well being of our campers and staff is central to all that we do. Being responsible for the campers and to each other in creating a positive community provides a very rewarding and enriching environment but also requires agreement on acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

The acceptable behaviors we are looking for are best summed up in Green River Preserve's Mission Statement and the Woodcraft Laws. Specific staff guidelines follow outlining unacceptable behavior in three main areas: Safety, Community Conduct, and Personal Conduct.

The mission of the Green River Preserve is to provide a challenging and nurturing learning experience and inspire a deep appreciation of interconnectedness, ecological respect, and the joy of living.

The Woodcraft Laws

Beauty

Be clean, both yourself and the place you live in. Understand and respect your body for it is the temple of the spirit. Be a friend of all wildlife. Conserve land, forest, and rivers.

Truth

Word of honor is sacred. Play fair. Foul play is treachery. Be reverent. Worship the Great Spirit and respect all worship of him by others.

Fortitude

Be brave. Courage is the noblest of all attainments. Be silent while your elders are speaking or otherwise show them deference. Obey. Obedience is the first duty of the woodcrafter.

Love

Be kind, do at least one act of unbargaining service each day. Be helpful, do your share of the work. Be joyful, seek the joy of being alive.

Staff Guidelines

Safety

- ◆ I understand that the Green River Preserve has a zero tolerance policy for physical violence, verbal abuse, and weapon use. Archery equipment and BB guns may only be brought to camp with the permission of the director and must be securely locked up following program guidelines. Furthermore, Green River Preserve does not tolerate behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment on the basis of race, gender, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or marital status. This policy extends to maintaining an environment free from sexual harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature will not be permitted. This extends to such harassment within the employment context as well as harassment of and between campers.
- ◆ I realize that staff may have visitors only with specific prior approval from the directors before they arrive. Staff may only have visitors infrequently and for short visits (during time off, and visit length is limited to 1-2 hours and one meal). No visitor is allowed to be alone anywhere with campers or in specialized program areas. All visitors must complete a Visitor Information Sheet available in the office. All visitations must be non-disruptive to the community and the staff member's work. Staff are responsible for their visitor's behavior; violation of staff policies by a visitor may constitute cause for my dismissal. Visitor may not bring pets to camp.
- ◆ I understand that to protect me and the camper I should never be alone with a camper. If a conversation is delicate then I should step away from the group but remain in plain sight. After camp the same standard of open communication should be used. Long term personal communication with campers is discouraged, but short friendly notes on post cards that can be read by parents are appropriate. Private e-mail communication and posting pictures and or names of campers on the internet is prohibited.

Community Conduct

- ◆ I understand that due to the short and intense nature of camp total participation is expected from me for all training sessions and throughout my entire employment period. In the event of death or illness in the family, or urgent business, leave will be granted in relation to individual circumstances at the discretion of the camp director.
- ◆ I realize that exclusive relationships are not in keeping with the inclusive nature of camp. Intimate relationships between and with campers are never appropriate. Intimate relationships between staff are discouraged and in all cases should be completely invisible to the campers.
- ◆ I realize that respectful communication is essential and that talking behind other people's backs, gossip, and complaining is hurtful to the community.
- ◆ I understand that dogs and cats are not permitted. Other pets that can be cared for in a small area and be used for teaching may be allowed with prior written permission. Exceptions will only be made for year-round staff on a case by case basis.
- ◆ I understand that a strong part of what makes Green River Preserve special is the absence of everyday distractions like radios, headphones, electronic equipment, hairdryers, and computers; and I agree to make my use invisible from the campers.

Personal Conduct

- ◆ I understand that participation in illegal activities during employment and time off is not allowed; forbidden activities include: illegal drug use or possession, misuse of prescription or over the counter drugs, smoking and the use of tobacco products on property, under age alcohol consumption, possession of alcohol on property, providing alcohol for minors, and being under the influence of alcohol while on property.
- ◆ Drug testing - I understand that as a condition of my employment I may be required to participate in drug screenings.
- ◆ Smoking - We would prefer for the campus and staff to be smoke free, but we do recognize that tobacco use is legal for the majority of staff and that addiction is very difficult to overcome. If a staff member is having difficulty with this policy an exception may be made but only with a written note from a director, in one place on campus designated by the directors, and during time outside your normal window of responsibilities. In all cases staff should not report to work smelling of smoke.
- ◆ Alcohol – Out of respect for the many staff that are not of age and our goal to be an inclusive community we feel that an alcohol free summer is reasonable for all. We do respect the right of individuals over 21 to consume alcohol but expect that camp community events should not be focused around alcohol.
- ◆ I understand that for me to be a good role model my clothing and appearance must be appropriate and professional. Short shorts, immodest clothing, and clothing with rude language or alcohol advertising are not permitted. Two Staff shirts will be supplied and should be worn on opening and closing day.
- ◆ I understand that glamorizing or encouraging the use of permanent hair color, tattoos, and body piercings is not allowed and that campers are not allowed to substantially change their appearance while in our care at camp.

By my signature below I certify that I have read the Community Covenant and Staff Guidelines and agree to abide by these guidelines and do all that is in my power to provide a positive experience to Green River Preserve campers. I understand that failure to abide by these guidelines may result in the Green River Preserve taking one of the following actions: dismissal, required counseling, fines, or a warning. I also understand that as a participating member of this community, where we have all agreed to the same set of rules, that "righteous indignation" is appropriate with other staff members who fail to live up to their commitments and that safety and conduct violations should be reported immediately to a director.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name (printed): _____

(Please return this form along with your signed contract to: Green River Preserve, 301 Green River Road, Cedar Mountain, NC 28718)