Explore Your Watershed is geared for 4th and 5th grade classes as an intensive, months-long whole watershed exploration program, designed around local Bay Area ecosystems. The program includes three in-class lessons and two field trips. In the first half of the program, students learn where water is found on earth, discover which organisms live near local creeks, and explore a creek. In the second half of the program, students study shoreline ecology, compare creek and shoreline ecosystems, and visit the Bay shoreline. Students explore ecosystem connections, water quality, and species diversity through nature hikes, science journaling, art, games, and macroinvertebrate study. Teachers are also provided with a lesson plan to engage their students in an action project to connect their community to what they learned through this program.

**Program Overview**

Lesson 1: Exploring Riparian Ecosystems *(1 hour in the classroom, TWP-led)*
Field Trip: Creek Exploration

Lesson 2: Exploring Shoreline Ecosystems *(1 hour in the classroom, TWP-led)*
Field Trip: Shoreline Exploration

Lesson 3: People, Water, and Ecosystems *(1 hour in the classroom, TWP-led)*
Optional Lesson 3: Action project to communicate about and protect watersheds *(content provided by TWP, teacher-led)*

**Program Goals**

We expect that students who participate in the *Explore Your Watershed* program will...

1. Have stronger connection to local natural riparian and shoreline ecosystems.
2. Engage in systems thinking, recognizing the connections between the world’s water, riparian and shoreline ecosystems, and human communities.
3. Act as leaders in educating their communities about the importance of local parks.

More information on the next page

*The Watershed Project's mission is to inspire Bay Area communities to understand, appreciate, and protect our local watersheds.*

If you're interested in bringing this program to your school, please contact us at: education@thewatershedproject.org

Explore Your Watershed

**Standards Connections**

*Explore Your Watershed* supports learning in the following NGSS practices:
- Asking questions (for science)
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information
- Engaging in argumentation from evidence
- Using models

*Explore Your Watershed* addresses aspects of the following NGSS Disciplinary Core Ideas:
- LS1.A Structure and Function
- ESS2.A Earth Materials and Systems
- LS2.A Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems
- ESS2.C The Roles of Water in Earth’s Surface Processes

**Field Trip Expectations**

We understand that elementary schools are often interested in having all the students in a particular grade level participate in the same programming. This often means that three or four classes are participating in the same program, which is great!

However, for field trips it's challenging for our small staff to provide a quality nature experience to students and teachers if three or four classes (more than 50-60 students) are attending the same field trip. Given this, we ask that no more than two classes attend a field trip on the same day. If we are scheduling this program with you and there are three or four classes participating, we will work with you and the other teachers at your school to schedule two days of field trips.

**Field Trip Locations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creek Field Trip Options</th>
<th>Shoreline Field Trip Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wildcat Canyon Regional Park/Alvarado Park</strong> Richmond</td>
<td><strong>Point Pinole Regional Shoreline</strong> Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creek access; hiking trails suitable for younger students; picnic tables, playground and bathrooms at Alvarado Park</td>
<td>Shoreline access; easy hiking/walking trails; local history of the park; picnic tables, playground and bathrooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More field trip options coming soon!

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