

TEACHER GUIDE



CAHABA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER *at Living River*

2000 Living River Parkway
Montevallo, Alabama 35115

Phone: 205.208.0035 ext. 3

www.cahabaec.org

cec@livingriver.org

WELCOME TO THE CAHABA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER!

The mission of the Cahaba Environmental Center is to inspire and empower learners of all ages to become stewards of the natural world by connecting them to the Cahaba River.

The Cahaba Environmental Center (CEC) at Living River is an outdoor education organization devoted to hands-on inquiry based learning. Located on 440 acres at a deep bend of the Cahaba River, the CEC is home to a 1-5 day environmental education program for K-12 students, as well as a field science school for colleges and universities.

We are so excited you have chosen to bring your students to the Cahaba Environmental Center! This Teacher Guide includes everything you will need to plan your trip and prepare your students, parents, and chaperones for this magical experience.

This Teacher Guide includes the following sections to help you organize your trip:

- General Program Information
- Teacher Planning Information and Forms
- Parent and Chaperone Information

We're looking forward to an incredible experience with you and your group! Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need more information.

Jessica Shumate
Program Coordinator
Email: jshumate@livingriver.org
Phone: 813.765.5360

Lauren Allred
Director
Email: lallred@livingriver.org
Phone: 256.225.8496

Table of Contents

General Program Information	3
Typical Program Schedules	3
Facility and Contact Information	5
Directions to the Cahaba Environmental Center	6
Curriculum Framework Overview	8
Curriculum Guide	10
Teacher Planning Information	13
Teacher/Chaperone Guidelines	13
Student Guidelines.....	13
Teacher Checklist	14
Required Planning Documents	15
Program Contract (return ASAP to confirm your spot).....	15
Pre-trip Questionnaire (return at least 2 months prior to your trip).....	16
Participant Release Forms Cover Sheet (return at least 3 weeks prior to your trip)	18
Trail Group Form (return at least 2 weeks prior to your trip).....	19
Cabin Assignment Form (return at least 2 weeks prior to your trip).....	21
Parent and Chaperone Information	22
Parent Letter	22
Participant Information Release Form	23
Clothing and Equipment Checklist	25
Chaperone Letter	26

Pricing Guidelines:

Detailed pricing guidelines available upon requests.

Cahaba Environmental Center

TYPICAL DAY PROGRAM SCHEDULE

9:00	Arrive at Cahaba Environmental Center at Living River <i>*Students should have their daypacks ready to go*</i>
9:15	Unload bus
9:25	Welcome and orientation for students and adults
9:40	Trail groups hit the trail with their instructors; begin Cahaba Curriculum
11:30	Sack lunch on trail *OR lunch in Dining Hall
12:00	Continue with Cahaba Curriculum
2:15	Closing ceremony
2:30	Departure

Cahaba Environmental Center TYPICAL 3-DAY PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Day 1

- 10:00 Arrive at Cahaba Environmental Center at Living River
Students should have their daypacks ready to go
- 10:00-11:00 Unload bus, drop off luggage in cabins
- 11:00-11:45 Orientation for students and adults, break into trail groups
- 11:45-12:45 Lunch
- 12:45 – 5:00 Cahaba Explore Day with trail groups
4:30 – 5:00 Teacher and Chaperone Free Time
- 5:00 – 6:00 Unpack luggage in cabins, free time for students
- 6:00 – 7:00 Dinner
- 7:00 – 8:30 Cahaba Explore Evening Program
- 8:30 – 8:45 Snack

Day 2

- 8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast, pack lunches, gather gear
- 9:00 –5:00 Cahaba Connect Day with trail groups
4:30 – 5:00 Teacher and Chaperone Free Time
- 5:00 – 6:00 Student Free Time
- 6:00 – 7:00 Dinner
- 7:00 – 8:30 Cahaba Connect Evening Program
- 8:30 – 8:45 Snack

Day 3

- 8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast, pack lunches
- 9:00 – 11:45 Cahaba Share Day with trail groups
- 11:45 – 12:30 Lunch, load bus, depart

Cahaba Environmental Center FACILITY AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Lodging: The CEC has six cabins with heating and air conditioning. Each cabin has two bathrooms, two sinks, and two showers with 8 bunk beds and two individual beds for adult participants. In total, the cabins sleep 18 individuals (typically 16 students and 2 adults). We also have a limited number of single-occupancy rooms that are available for teachers upon request. All together, we can provide accommodation for up to 114 people. All participants must bring their own sleeping bag or bedding, towels, and toiletries.

Meals: Delicious, kid-friendly meals are prepared by our talented foodservice staff and served family-style in our dining hall. Special dietary needs can usually be accommodated with **advance notice**. Any special dietary needs including allergies should be included in individual's PIR forms. Most meals will be served in our dining hall, while occasional lunches may be eaten on trail if requested.

Potential Risk During Programs: All of our programs at the CEC involve hiking on trails and being outside for extended periods of time. While every effort is made by the instructors to exercise caution to prevent mishaps, participants must assume full responsibility for their individual safety and must provide their own health and accident insurance. Keep in mind that we are sharing the outdoors with various critters and unpredictable natural elements. Protective clothing, sunscreen, raingear, and insect repellent are advised.

All participants (including adults) must complete and sign a Participant Information and Release (PIR) form.

Teachers are responsible for checking that all forms are filled out completely and have all the necessary signatures. Students with incomplete forms may not attend the CEC. As stated within this document, these forms should be emailed, mailed, or faxed to the CEC prior to program dates so appropriate plans can be made.

Contact Information: Feel free to contact staff at the Cahaba Environmental Center for general program information.

Cahaba Environmental Center at Living River
2000 Living River Parkway
Montevallo, AL 35115
Phone: 205-208-0035 x3

Emergency Contacts: In the event of an emergency, schools and families can reach teachers and program staff at the following numbers:

Cahaba Environmental Center	205.208.0035 ext. 3 (landline)
Jessica Shumate, Program Coordinator	205.476.4888 (landline) 813.765.5360 (cell)
Lauren Allred, Director	205.476.4910 (landline) 256.225-8496 (cell)
Jenny Thagard, Living River Executive Director	205.344.0701 (cell)

Cahaba Environmental Center

DIRECTIONS

The Cahaba Environmental Center is located at Living River, approximately 45 miles southwest of Birmingham.

Physical Address

Cahaba Environmental Center
2000 Living River Parkway
Montevallo, AL 35115

GPS Coordinates

Latitude: N33 10.045
Longitude: W86 59.653

Directions from the North (1-65):

Take 1-65 South to Exit 234 (Shelby County Airport). Turn left to merge onto CR-87. At the light, continue straight for 1.5 miles until it dead-ends. Take a right on CR-22 for 9.6 miles until it dead-ends. Right on CR-10 for 5.5 miles. When you see CR-251 on the right, continue on CR-10 for .8 miles. At the Living River sign, turn right onto Living River Parkway. Continue for approximately 2 miles until you reach the Living River entrance on the right.

Directions from the South (1-65):

Take 1-65 North to Exit 228 (Calera/University of Montevallo Hwy). Turn left on SR-25. Follow this road 7.1 miles to junction with SR 155 at the traffic light. Take a right onto SR 155 and continue for .5 miles where the road changes to CR-10 at traffic light at downtown Montevallo. Continue onto CR-10 for 11.9 miles. At the Living River sign, turn right onto Living River Parkway. Continue for approximately 2 miles until you reach the Living River entrance on the right.

Directions from I-20/59:

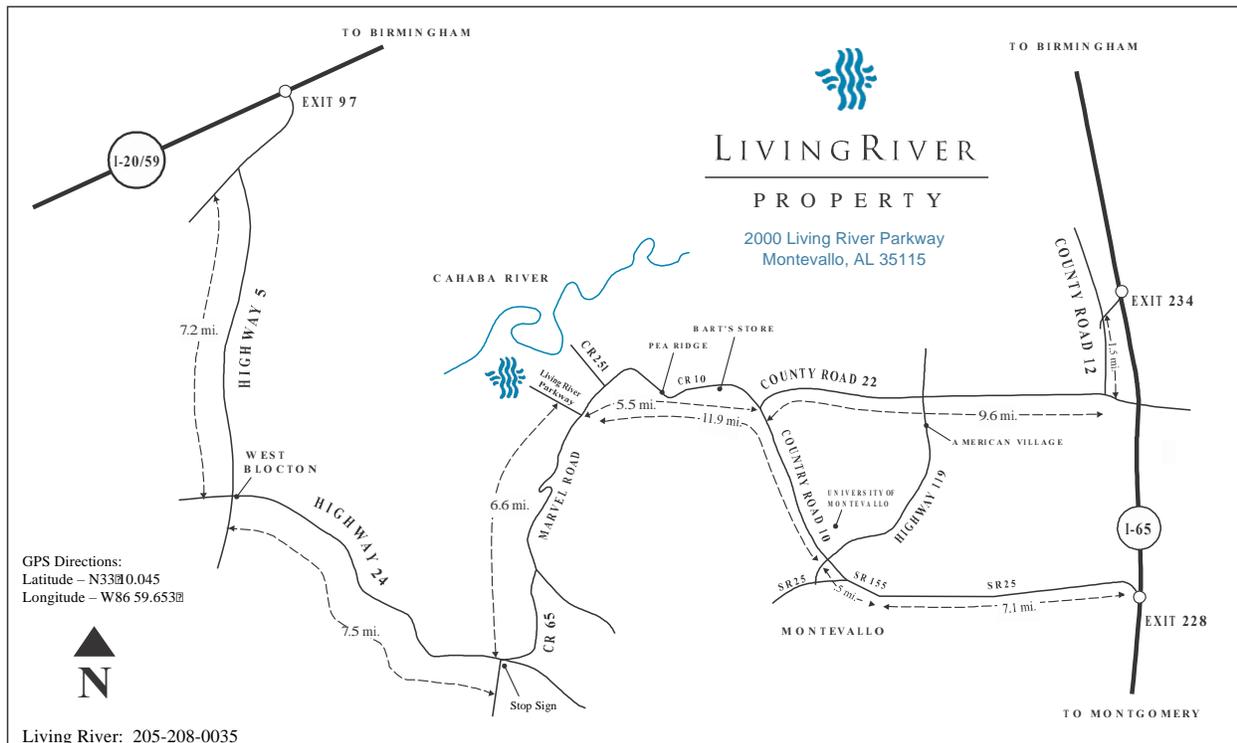
From 1-20/59 take Exit 97. Proceed southwest for 3 miles. Take a left on Hwy 5 for 7.2 miles. Do not turn left towards the 'Business District' but instead turn left onto Hwy 24 for 7.5 miles towards West Blocton. At the stop sign veer left onto CR-65 for 6.6 miles (CR-65 changes names to "Marvel Road"). At the Living River sign, turn left onto Living River Parkway. Continue for approximately 2 miles until you reach the Living River entrance on the right.

Estimated driving times to Living River

Birmingham:	1 hour
Tuscaloosa:	1 hour, 15 mins
Montevallo:	30 mins
Montgomery:	1 hour, 30 mins

****IMPORTANT:** *At least one chaperone or teacher from your school group must drive separately so a vehicle will be at the Cahaba Environmental Center in the event that a student must leave early or an emergency should occur.*

Cahaba Environmental Center MAP AND ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE INFORMATION



AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

We would like to have schools arrive at the Cahaba Environmental Center by 10:00 a.m. on Monday/Wednesday and 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday/Friday. Please text or call your program coordinator with an ETA when you are leaving the school to come to the CEC. If you cannot arrive at your scheduled time, please contact us at 205-208-0035 ext. 3. Keep in mind that most cell phones do not work on the way to our facilities.

Late Arrival: Please contact us if any member of your group plans to arrive later than 5:00 p.m., as we lock our gates at that time. We can arrange for entry into the gate after hours if we know ahead of time.

Phones: Keep in mind that our cell phone service is limited on-site. We have a landline located in our dining hall that may be used upon request. If you or your chaperones anticipate needing to make calls during your trip, please let our staff know when you arrive, and we will try to accommodate your needs.

Cahaba Environmental Center CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

Mission Statement:

The CEC inspires and empowers learners of all ages to be stewards of the natural world by connecting them to the Cahaba River.

Program Objectives:

- Students will make personal connections to the Cahaba River through first-hand experiences.
- Students will increase their awareness and understanding of Alabama ecosystems and human interactions with the Cahaba River.
- Students will connect with each other and gain a better sense of community.
- Students will become empowered to make positive decisions as environmental stewards.

The Educational Philosophy of the CEC:

At the CEC, we believe learning should be meaningful, memorable, and fun! Our curriculum is:

Based in Place: The content we teach stems from the natural and physical features of our site and provides concrete, real-world examples of science and social science concepts for students.

Student-Centered: Our educators serve as facilitators, supporting students in asking questions, making connections, and building understanding. The students’ interests and passions direct the educational components within our overall curriculum.

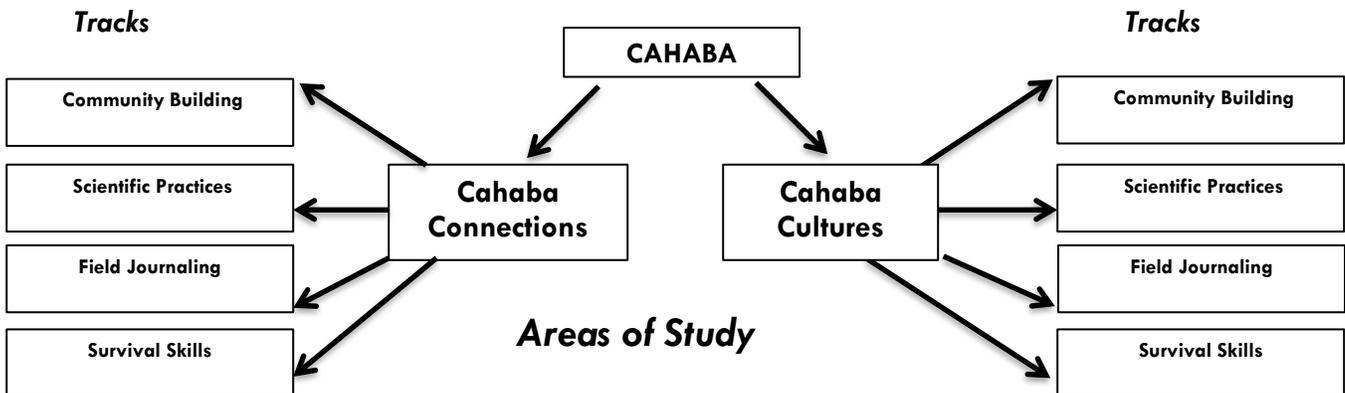
Hands-On: We utilize our outdoor classrooms by providing experiential learning experiences and teachable moments unique to the outdoors that engage a variety of learning styles.

Holistic: We teach to the whole child, not just their brains! We consider the physical, emotional, and cognitive learning opportunities and needs of our students.

Inquiry-Based: We follow the 5-E Instructional Model when designing the flow of our activities and lessons. Students are active participants, encouraged to explore, observe, and ask questions!

Curriculum

At the CEC, the rich cultural history and diverse ecosystems found on our site tell the ongoing story of the Cahaba River watershed and provide the foundations for our curriculum. Our two Areas of Study and four Tracks provide the framework of our curriculum. The curriculum was developed to align with the Alabama Courses of Study.



Areas of Study

At the CEC, we offer two Areas of Study: **Cahaba Connections**, our science-focused curriculum, and **Cahaba Cultures**, our social studies-focused curriculum. While each Area of Study uses a different lens, both tell the story of the Cahaba River watershed. Teachers choose one Area of Study, or can request a combination of the two. More information about the two Areas of Study is found on pages 9-11.

Tracks

Within each *Area of Study*, teachers can choose a track that focuses their experience. Selecting a track helps to clarify the group's goals for their time at the CEC. The track selection is as follows:

1. **Community Building:** This track focuses on developing a sense of community, cooperation, communication, and other interpersonal and teamwork skills within a trail group. Selecting Community Building will result in more team initiatives throughout the experience that highlight the content of the selected *Area of Study* and provide an emphasis on community within a science or social studies context.
2. **Scientific Practices:** This track emphasizes the scientific method and inquiry practices throughout an experience at the CEC. Selecting Scientific Practices will result in students conducting their own field investigation as it relates to either *Area of Study*. In this track, students generate questions, develop hypotheses, collect data, and interpret their results as a means of investigating and connecting to a piece of the Cahaba River watershed.
3. **Field Journaling:** In this track, students record observations, questions, and reflections in a field journal through writing and drawing. Students will take time to document their personal experiences with the ecosystems of the CEC and explore the value of keeping a field journal to enhance their observations and connections to the natural world. Field Journaling incorporates language arts and visual arts into the selected *Area of Study*.
4. **Survival Skills:** This track focuses on the concepts and abilities that our human ancestors used for thousands of years to provide their basic necessities for survival. Students apply critical thinking skills to discover how to utilize natural resources in creative ways. In both *Areas of Study*, students will experiment with survival techniques and skills, and they will analyze how human survival is dependent on the surrounding environment.

The Curricular Flow

A multi-day experience at the CEC follows the flow of: **Explore, Connect, Share!** The explanation below follows a 3-day program. A 5-day program would also follow this model, extended over the 5-day period.

- **Day 1: Explore Day:** On their first day, students explore and orient themselves to our site. They hone their observation skills and learn background information about the Cahaba River watershed and the biotic and abiotic factors that make up the area.
- **Day 2: Connect Day:** On their second day, students investigate the numerous interconnections woven throughout the Cahaba River watershed. These connections include ecological connections between water, land, and living things, as well as human connections with the environment and each other.
- **Day 3: Share Day:** On their third day, students return home from their experience at the CEC. However, we do not want the lessons and connections students have gained to stay behind as they load the bus! Share Day is all about applying what students have learned during their experience to their home environments. Students will reflect and process their experience while they explore and assess the relevancy to their daily lives.

Cahaba Environmental Center

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Below are descriptions of the key concepts and vocabulary covered in each Area of Study. Because of the flexibility of our program, each field group may have different activities based on their instructor and group needs. All activities will be framed by the curriculum objectives and goals expressed by the teacher.

AREA OF STUDY #1: CAHABA CONNECTIONS

In the Cahaba Connections Area of Study, students connect to the Cahaba River watershed from an ecological perspective. Cahaba Connections provides students with a deep appreciation and understanding of the Cahaba River and empowers them to begin to take responsibility for this amazing natural resource. The topics below are interwoven throughout a thematic, multi-day experience.

- **Watershed Science**

Students explore our piece of the Cahaba River watershed, observing how the forest, geology, and humans connect to the water. Students will discover how water flows and moves throughout the landscape, affects its surroundings and, in turn, is affected by external forces.

Vocabulary: watershed, water cycle, evaporation, precipitation, condensation, transpiration, biodiversity, bio-assessment, water quality, macro-invertebrate, turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen

- **Geologic Processes**

Students unearth the geologic history of our area of Alabama, including the process of coal formation, by studying the clues left in the rocks of the CEC. Students discuss the significance of sandstone, shale, and the fossils found on our site and discover the relationship between these geological features and the Cahaba River.

Vocabulary: geologic time, rock cycle, sedimentary, metamorphic, igneous, weathering, erosion, deposition, sediment, compression, coal, fossils

- **Biodiversity**

Students explore the various living things that call the Cahaba River watershed home. They discover the unique biodiversity of the Cahaba River in both aquatic and terrestrial creatures and learn to identify various species along the way.

Vocabulary: biodiversity, herbivore, carnivore, omnivore, macro-invertebrates

- **Ecosystems**

Students differentiate between biotic and abiotic factors in the Cahaba River ecosystem and identify examples of both. Students learn different niches that Cahaba River animals and plants occupy, adaptations they have for survival, and ways they interconnect through food webs.

Vocabulary: biotic, abiotic, ecosystem, food web, producer, consumer, decomposer, niche, adaptation, habitat

- **Human Land Use Practices**

Students will discover and interpret evidence of human land use practices found on our site. They compare various forest types including reclaimed land areas and use these observations to discuss the role of humans in the environment.

Vocabulary: renewable resources, non-renewable resources, reclamation, sustainability, succession

AREA OF STUDY #2: CAHABA CULTURES

In the Cahaba Cultures Area of Study, students explore the cultural history of the Cahaba River watershed. Students connect to the Cahaba River by following the history of human interactions with the river and land, and reflect on their own relationship with the environment. The topics below are interwoven throughout a thematic, multi-day experience.

- **Native American Cultural History**

Students explore the history, traditions, and cultures of Alabama Native American groups living along the Cahaba River. They investigate the ways that Native American cultures have interacted with the environment and how this has changed over time.

Vocabulary: anthropology, culture, artifacts, replicas, sustainability, hunter/gatherer, nomadic

- **Alabama Frontier**

Students analyze the influence and impact of European settlers and other immigrants on the Cahaba River watershed community. Students discover interactions of settlers with Native American cultural groups and follow the development of settlements with Alabama's growing population.

Vocabulary: Cahawba, settlement, agriculture, governance, geographic regions, migration

- **Natural Resource Management**

Students follow human natural resource management practices and their changes over time. Students learn of past and present environmental policies, technological developments, and events that affected the way humans interact with the land and water around the Cahaba. Students investigate the ways the landscape reflects its history and consider their own interactions with the environment.

Vocabulary: technology, value, land management, succession, disturbance, natural resources, policy, economy

- **Coal Mining**

Students explore the importance of coal mining in the history of the CEC's area of the Cahaba River. Students read clues from the landscape to unearth the coal mining and railroad history at the CEC. Students learn how coal is mined and land is reclaimed. Students also explore the history and culture of mining towns and the economics of coal mining.

Vocabulary: geologic time, sedimentary rock, coal, surface mining, underground mining, reclamation, renewable resource, non-renewable resource

FOOD EDUCATION

(INCLUDED IN ALL OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS)

Throughout the meals at the CEC, students will learn about where their food comes from and where it goes if it is thrown away. Students will examine the energy that goes into producing, transporting, and preparing the food that we eat.

Vocabulary: energy, food waste, landfill, compost, local

EVENING PROGRAMS

We offer a variety of evening programs. You will select an evening program for each night of your group's stay. Please take note of any recommendations to select the best evening program to fit your *Area of Study*!

- **Night Hike**
Experience how magical the forest can be in the dark! Students utilize all of their senses and their own adaptations to navigate at night and learn about other nocturnal adaptations found in Alabama critters. Recommended as a first night activity. NOT recommended in May because of daylight.

Vocabulary: adaptation, nocturnal, diurnal, crepuscular, arrhythmic, rods, cones, rhodopsin, triboluminescence
- **Campfire**
Lighten up the darkest nights with a campfire filled with songs and stories that highlight the fun that can be had without electricity. Our campfire is also a time for students to shine and contribute to the creative energy. Recommended as a second night activity.

Vocabulary: storytelling, oral history
- **Science Symposium**
NOTE: This evening program is ONLY for groups taking the Scientific Practices Track.
Come one, come all! The Science Symposium is a forum for students to present the findings of their scientific investigations conducted during the day to their classmates. In a safe and fun atmosphere, students participate in scientific discourse: teaching one another, asking questions, and celebrating each other's discoveries!

Vocabulary: observation, question, hypothesis, experiment, variable, control, data, conclusion
- **Town Hall**
Not every decision is easy to make, and the CEC needs your help with an issue inspired by the history of our site! Students take a trip back to 2004 to discuss the potential removal of the Marvel Slab. The Marvel Slab was built in 1964 by a coal mining company to bridge the Cahaba River, allowing their coal trucks access to their property on the other side. The Slab now often acts as a dam on the river, making it a potential threat to the river's ecosystem. Students will take on the roles of various stakeholders in the community to decide what action should be taken. Students learn about coal mining history, river ecology, and land management practices at the CEC.

Vocabulary: reclamation, land management, stakeholders, ethics, perspective
- **Culture Shock**
Explore what happens when two cultures collide, much like Alabama's Native American cultures and the incoming settlers of the late 1700s and early 1800s. Students create their own cultures and become anthropologists, experiencing the challenges of understanding, trading with, and assimilating into a completely unfamiliar culture. Students will also discuss the benefits of taking the time to respect and learn from another culture and discover how this simulation connects to Alabama's cultural history. Recommended for groups in the Cahaba Cultures Area of Study.

Vocabulary: culture, anthropologist, customs, assimilate, Creek, Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw

TEACHER PLANNING INFORMATION

Teacher and Chaperone Guidelines:

1. There must be a minimum of 2 adult chaperone for each trail group and a minimum of 2 adult chaperones to supervise each cabin. *The Cahaba Environmental Center desired adult to student ratio is 1:8.
2. One chaperone must drive separately so a vehicle will be at the environmental center in the event that a student must leave early or an emergency should occur.
3. Because teachers and chaperones are responsible for student supervision, we expect that teachers and chaperones will refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages during the entire Cahaba Environmental Center session and, as such, no alcohol is allowed in the cabins or on property. Additionally, tobacco use is not permitted inside any of our buildings.
4. We expect that all adults have undergone appropriate screening regarding the school's and state's policies regarding child protection. All adults should be trained to minimize the potential of being in a one-on-one situation with a child that is not their own. The CEC policy adheres to the "Rule of Three."

Teacher and Chaperone Responsibilities:

1. **Be a positive role model** – Arrive at the Cahaba Environmental Center ready to participate with enthusiasm and a good attitude. Remember that your main role at Cahaba Environmental Center is to provide supervision and interact with ALL students.
2. **Overall preparedness** – Help students be prepared for all activities; several reminders will be needed
3. **Field Study** – Participate fully in lesson activities and follow the lead of the instructor. Assist in reinforcing the instructor's behavioral expectations and encourage active participation by all students in the group. Teachers and chaperones should be able to hike 2-5 miles each day and should be prepared to spend the entire day in the elements.
4. **Medications** – Depending on your school's policy, teachers and/or chaperones may be required to distribute student medications. Cahaba Environmental Center staff are unable to distribute student medications.
5. **Meal times** – Help our staff facilitate an orderly mealtime; assist staff with crowd control and dining hall rules. Assist students and staff with dining hall clean up after meals.
6. **Free time** – **Teachers and chaperones are solely responsible for supervising students during free time: 5:00-6:00 p.m.** Free time areas include the playfield and cabins. During this time we ask that teachers act as transporters for students between these locations.
7. **Cabins** – Supervise students in cabins and enforce lights out. Students are not allowed in cabins unsupervised.
8. **Check out** – Assist students with cabin clean up on the last day. Students may only head to breakfast after they have swept and tidied rooms and packed up their luggage.
9. Please bring an alarm clock, a watch, and a flashlight.

Student Guidelines:

1. All students are expected to participate in the hikes and daily activities unless physically ill. If a student is ill, they will be supervised by teachers or chaperones, or their family will be called to pick them up.
2. Students must stay within Cahaba Environmental Center boundaries at all times.
3. Students will be responsible for keeping rooms and grounds clean.
4. No weapons (including knives), candy, or gum are allowed at the Cahaba Environmental Center. Teachers from each school will determine the electronic policy.
5. Quiet time is 10:00 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. Time for lights out will be selected by the lead teachers. We recommend 10:00 p.m. at the latest, typically earlier for younger students.
6. The teacher will make cabin assignments prior to arrival at the Cahaba Environmental Center; only those students assigned to a cabin are allowed inside that cabin.
7. **Absolutely NO food or drinks (except water) are allowed in cabins.**

CEC TEACHER CHECKLIST

***Teachers, please use this checklist to ensure your school group's information is received by the CEC staff well in advance of your arrival.

As soon as possible

- Submit your Program Contract (page 15) (as well as a deposit)
- If desired, arrange a parent meeting at your school (CEC staff will be happy to attend at an additional fee.)
- Begin to recruit physically-active chaperones (at least one for every field group)
- Arrange transportation
- Collect a deposit from students to secure their spot on the trip (suggested)

2 Months Prior to your Arrival

- Submit your *Pre-Trip Questionnaire* (pages 16-17) to your program coordinator
- Photocopy and send out *Parent Letter, Participant Information and Release forms and Equipment Checklist* to students
- Schedule a student pre-trip visit for your class with your program coordinator
- Continue collecting payments from students and chaperones

1 Month Prior to your Arrival

- Select chaperones and send them chaperone letters and chaperone role information
- Collect forms and final fees from students and chaperones. Teachers and chaperones also need to fill out *Participant Information and Release forms*.
- Check that *Participant Information and Release forms* (pages 23-24) are completed, signed on the back, and have accurate medical and dietary information. (Students with incomplete forms cannot stay at the Cahaba Environmental Center.)
- Confirm final participant numbers with your program coordinator

3 Weeks Prior to your Arrival

- Arrange with your school's finance office to write a check or purchase order for the total amount of your trip
- Ensure that the completed *Participant Information and Release (PIR)* forms for students, chaperones, and teachers – with coversheet (pages 18, 23-24) – have arrived at the Cahaba Environmental Center.

2 Weeks Prior to your Arrival

- Mail the check or purchase order for the total amount of your trip to the CEC
- Submit the following information to your program coordinator:
 - Completed Trail Group form (pages 19-20)
 - Completed Cabin Assignment forms (page 21)
- Confirm bus transportation arrangements, give schedule and directions to bus driver
- Make copies of the following to bring to the Cahaba Environmental Center for your personal use:
 - *Participant Information and Release forms*
 - *Trail Group and Room Assignment forms*
- Meet with the chaperones:
 - Share trail group and room assignments with chaperones
 - Discuss *Chaperone Responsibilities* (page 13) with chaperones
- With Students:
 - Discuss expected academic goals and behavior expectations. Discuss consequences for students who do not follow behavioral expectations
 - Go over clothing and equipment list, answer questions, and contact Cahaba Environmental Center staff if you expect to need to borrow any items for your class

Arrival Day at the Cahaba Environmental Center

- Make sure each student and chaperone has:
 - Daypack: with water bottle, raingear and extra layers for cold weather
 - Separate bag with everything else on the equipment checklist
 - Remind students NOT to bring weapons (including knives), extra food, candy, gum, etc.
- Bring completed, signed *Participant Information and Release forms* for all participants (for your own use)

Cahaba Environmental Center Program Contract

EMAIL jshumate@livingriver.org or FAX to [205-449-6172](tel:205-449-6172) Attn: Cahaba Environmental Center

School: _____ Program Date(s): _____
Lead Teacher: _____ Principal: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
School Phone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____
Email: _____ School Nurse: _____
Best way to contact (circle one): School Phone / Cell / Email Best Time to Contact: _____

Estimate # of Student Participants: _____ Grade(s): _____

Arrival time: _____ (recommended 9-10am) Departure time: _____ (1:30 for multi-day program; 2:30 for one day)

Multiple Day Programs ONLY:

Do you need separate lodging for teachers not apart from student cabins? Y N For how many? _____

One Day Programs ONLY:

Do you need lunch provided? Y N If yes, which would you prefer? ___ Sack Lunch on Trail ___ Lunch in Dining Hall

RESERVATION POLICY:

Please return this form as soon as possible to guarantee and reserve your preferred dates. Depending on time between booking and programs dates, a non-refundable deposit is required 1 month from the date your reservation is made. All checks should be made out to Cahaba Environmental Center. Your program coordinator will be in contact with you regarding the amount of your deposit, which is dependent on your program length.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:

An estimate of participant numbers is required within this document to secure program dates in our calendar. A more accurate count is due 30 days prior to your scheduled trip date. In the event of a cancellation or a significant drop in participant numbers, the school is responsible for the cost of 75% of the total number of participants as stated in this Program Contract. This does not include any cancellations or rescheduling initiated by the CEC. Cancellations two weeks or less away from program dates will not be able to be refunded. **Rescheduling in the event of unforeseen circumstances is recommended and encouraged.

The CEC reserves the right to send home any child who becomes ill, destroys property, behaves aggressively, or takes any other action detrimental to other students of the program. The school will be responsible for providing transportation in such cases and for any damage to the facilities and equipment. No refunds will be made under these conditions. The CEC cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to property brought to the CEC. Please encourage students to leave valuables and large amounts of cash at home.

PAYMENT:

Your full balance should be mailed no later than 2 weeks prior to your program date.
All checks should be made out to *Cahaba Environmental Center*.
Please contact your program coordinator if special arrangements need to be made.

I agree to the terms of this contract and agree that my group will abide by all Cahaba Environmental Center policies.

Signature of Lead Teacher

Date

Signature of Principal/Administrator

Date

Section Two: Customizing Your Experience

For information on the CEC's curriculum framework and guide, please see page 8.

Areas of Study:

Areas of Study provide the curricular focus for your students' experience. Please choose one:

- Cahaba Connections (science-focus)
- Cahaba Cultures (social studies-focus)

Canoeing Option:

Canoeing is not guaranteed due to varying weather and river conditions. Please express your level of interest in canoeing on the Cahaba River while at the CEC:

- Interested in canoeing
- Not interested in canoeing

Tracks:

Choose the track emphasis for your experience. Elements of all tracks are present in every CEC multi-day experience. Please select one:

- Community Building
- Scientific Practices
- Field Journaling
- Survival Skills

Evening Programs:

Please select 2 evening programs for 3-day programs, 4 evening programs for 5-day programs:

- Night Hike
- Town Hall
- Campfire
- Culture Shock
- Science Symposium (only with Scientific Track)

Section Three: Connecting to the Classroom

To help our program meet your desired outcomes for this experience, please rank the following goals from 1 (highest priority) to 5 (lowest priority). It is okay if there's a tie!

- _____ Personal Growth in Students
- _____ Group Bonding
- _____ Educational Content
- _____ Comfort in the Outdoors
- _____ Stewardship/Responsible Environmental Behavior

How do you plan to prepare your students for their experience at the CEC? Will your students be reading any books or studying any concepts or vocabulary in school that connect with the curriculum or experience at the CEC?

Is there anything else we should know to better work with your students? For example, your school's teaching philosophy, local environmental issues, or student involvement in any community projects.

(3 day programs) For pre- and post-trips, please list your top three date choices for each visit, beginning at least two weeks before and two weeks after your visit to the CEC.

Participant Information and Release (PIR) Form Cover Sheet
(Please include this cover sheet when mailing and/or faxing the PIR forms)

Remember:

- Mail, fax, or scan and email the signed originals of the PIR Forms to the CEC
- All forms must arrive at the CEC at least 3 weeks prior to your visit
- Students without a completed and signed health form **MAY NOT ATTEND** the CEC program

School: _____

Lead Teacher: _____

School Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Included:

PIR Forms (please have the documents alphabetized and separated by students and adults)

Numbers Received for:

Girls _____

Boys _____

Adults _____ (including teachers and chaperones)

Forms that have not been received:

(Again, please remember that any student without a completed and signed Health Form may not come to the CEC.)

Cahaba Environmental Center TRAIL GROUP FORM

TRAIL GROUPS: Please divide your class into trail groups, with at least 2 chaperones in each group. It is important to group students in socially compatible groups. If you are bringing multiple grade levels, please group by grade level.

Email this form to your program coordinator or fax it to: 205-208-0035 (Attn: Cahaba Environmental Center) at least **2 weeks before** your group is scheduled to be at the Cahaba Environmental Center. *If you create your own digital version for this list, please send that instead.*

IMPORTANT!!! Your specific number of trail groups will be sent to you by your program coordinator. Feel free to copy the pages as needed. *Also, please include first and last names for students and chaperones.*

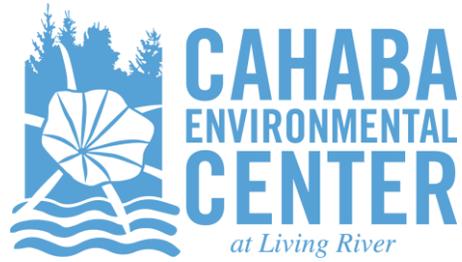
Trail Group #_____	
1.	7.
2.	8.
3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	12.
Chap:	Chap:

Trail Group #_____	
1.	7.
2.	8.
3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	12.
Chap:	Chap:

Trail Group # _____	
1.	7.
2.	8.
3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	12.
Chap:	Chap:

Trail Group # _____	
1.	7.
2.	8.
3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	12.
Chap:	Chap:

Trail Group # _____	
1.	7.
2.	8.
3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	12.
Chap:	Chap:



Dear Parent or Guardian,

At the Cahaba Environmental Center (CEC), students experience Alabama's ecosystems, geology, and cultural history first-hand. The CEC is an outdoor education program located at Living River: A Retreat on the Cahaba. Your child's class will be embarking on a journey to the CEC as part of their school curriculum. This opportunity provides students with a positive educational experience that allows them to develop social and personal skills, as well as experience academic and physical challenges in a cooperative outdoor setting. Our hikes and educational activities are led by professional environmental educators who specialize in teaching young people in the outdoors.

The CEC is located along the Cahaba River on the border of Shelby and Bibb Counties. The CEC is 45 miles south of Birmingham and 12 miles outside of Montevallo. Students, teachers, and chaperones spend their days hiking and participating in educational activities, learning cooperative living skills during our multiday program, and sleeping in cabins.

Your child's class will be attending the Cahaba Environmental Center from _____ to _____.

Enclosed with this letter you will find:

- Participant Information and Release Form (PIR)
- Clothing and Equipment Checklist

Please return the completed Participant Information and Release Form to your child's teacher by _____.

Because we offer hands-on learning opportunities, we spend most of our time outdoors, even in the rain and cold. While we always hope for sunny and warm days, it is crucial to be prepared for cold, wet, and windy weather. Please carefully look over the *Clothing and Equipment Checklist* well in advance to make sure your child will be adequately prepared for their trip to the CEC.

Please contact your child's teacher if you are interested in accompanying the class as a chaperone or if you have any questions or concerns. If you have any questions regarding our program, personnel or facilities, please contact your child's teacher or visit our website at www.cahabaec.org for more information.

Support from parents and guardians is essential in making this a successful and positive educational experience for everyone involved! We are looking forward to sharing this unique experience with your child!

Sincerely,

Jessica Shumate, Program Coordinator
Lauren Allred, CEC Director
Jenny Thagard, Living River Executive Director

REQUIRED SIGNATURES

Participants cannot take part in the Cahaba Environmental Center program without signing the following release.

Assumption of Risk and Agreements of Release and Hold Harmless

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the description of this program and have noted any medical or physical conditions that might affect the participant's performance in this activity. I understand that this program involves known and inherent risks, as well as unknown/unanticipated risks. Inherent risks may include those ordinarily associated with physical activity in wilderness terrain.

In consideration for the Cahaba Environmental Center permitting me or my child to participate in this program, I hereby, for myself, my heirs and survivors, release the CEC from all personal injury, property damage, loss of personal property, or any other loss sustained by me or my child while participating in this program, including travel to and from the program site, and agree to hold harmless CEC and its employees, representatives and volunteers from any and all claims made by me, my child or my heirs and survivors. In case of accident or illness I will bear the cost of all evacuation procedures and medical care.

Release Authorization for Medical Treatment for Minors

If the participant is under the legal age of consent (18 years), the law requires that we have a parent's permission to give medical service should the need arise.

The undersigned, who is one of the parents having legal custody, or the legal guardian, of the minor participant named above, hereby gives permission to personnel of Cahaba Environmental Center to authorize any X-rays, tests, procedures, anesthetic, surgery or treatment on behalf of, and to provide or arrange for any transportation of, participant as may be required in the event of an emergency. If the emergency contacts designated on this form cannot be timely contacted, I hereby give permission to a licensed physician, or other qualified health care provider as may be appropriate, to administer such treatment to participant as may be necessary under circumstances, including hospitalization of the patient. I also agree to assume any financial responsibility for my child's care.

Photo Release

I authorize and consent to the CEC taking photographs and video film of the participant in its programs, and to the unrestricted use and publication of such photos or videos to promote the activities of CEC. (No names will be used without obtaining prior written consent.)

I HAVE READ THE AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND IT, AND GRANT PERMISSION FOR MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM IDENTIFIED ABOVE. THE UNDERSIGNED ALSO UNDERSTANDS THAT PARTICIPATION BY ME OR MY CHILD WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED WITHOUT THIS PROVISION.

If participant is under 18:

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

Print Name & Relationship to Participant _____

If participant is 18 and over

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Cahaba Environmental Center

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Please carefully look over the following checklist and check each item as it is packed. If you have trouble coming up with any of these items, please let your teacher know well before your visit, and we will be happy to assist in any way we can. When you arrive at the Cahaba Environmental Center, come dressed ready to spend the day outside. You should arrive with your daypack ready to go and your overnight bag packed separately.

Parents and Students, please be sure to:

1. Limit yourself to one suitcase or duffel bag and a rolled up sleeping bag. You will carry your belongings from the bus to your cabin.
2. Put your name on everything.
3. Bring OLD clothes and shoes! You will get wet and muddy.
4. Pack a raincoat or poncho (and warm clothes if applicable). Classes will be held outside rain or shine!

Day Pack – packed with the items listed below:

- Rain gear (rain coat or poncho)
- Warm fleece or jacket
- Water bottle (watertight)
- Pen or pencil
- Journal
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray

Cool Weather Additions:

- Wool and synthetic clothing work best!
- Long underwear/ thick tights
 - Thick socks
 - Coat
 - Warm knit hat (pack in day pack!)
 - Warm gloves (pack in day pack!)

In another bag, backpack, duffel, or suitcase, please pack:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 4 pairs of socks <input type="checkbox"/> 3 pairs of underwear <input type="checkbox"/> 2 pairs of long pants <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 pairs shorts <input type="checkbox"/> 3 shirts <input type="checkbox"/> Long sleeve shirt <input type="checkbox"/> Soap, personal toiletries <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen <input type="checkbox"/> Warm sleeping bag or sheets and blanket | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Towel and hand towel <input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas <input type="checkbox"/> Pillow <input type="checkbox"/> Jacket (for cool evenings) <input type="checkbox"/> Warm sweater or sweatshirt <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush and toothpaste <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight (for adults) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 pairs of closed-toe shoes (1 to get dirty/wet) |
|--|---|

Optional:

- Disposable camera
- Binoculars
- Sandals for shower
- Flashlights
- Rain boots

Give to your teacher:

- Approved medications and written directions (with name on it—teacher will control all medications)

***Do NOT bring any weapons (including knives), candy, gum, or food**



Dear Chaperone,

Thank you for volunteering your time as a chaperone for your school's trip to the Cahaba Environmental Center (CEC)! You will be playing a vital role in making a very special learning experience materialize for your child's class. It's important for all chaperones to know how the program works and what is expected of them.

Chaperones are expected to supervise all students from your school throughout the duration of the program, including nighttime. Chaperones will be assigned to one trail group to help facilitate the group-building process during the day and one cabin to ensure adequate overnight supervision.

Upon arrival to the CEC, an adult orientation will reiterate chaperone responsibilities and expectations, as well as define boundaries and safety rules.

The most important duties of the chaperones are to:

- Be a positive role model
- Supervise recreation and free times, including movement from one activity to another. Students are not permitted in cabins without adult supervision.
- Actively participate in all activities with the learning groups (chaperones should be able to hike up to 5 miles each day and should be comfortable spending all day in the elements)
- Encourage student participation in all activities and cooperation with each other
- Assist instructors in enforcing behavioral expectations
- Enforce lights out

Chaperones (and teachers) will also be responsible for attending to student needs during the night. It is very helpful to the program if you attend a chaperone meeting with your child's teacher to become familiar with the schedule and your responsibilities. These assignments are determined by the lead teacher of your school group.

We encourage chaperones to take an active role in supporting the CEC instructors during program activities. The way you fulfill your duties will strongly affect the experience of the students. Although safety is primarily the responsibility of the instructors, you may be called upon for support.

At least one chaperone must have his or her personal vehicle at the CEC in the event that a student needs to go home before the completion of the program. Please coordinate your travel plans with your child's teacher. Also, each chaperone should bring an alarm clock, a watch, and a flashlight. If you anticipate needing to make a phone call while at the Cahaba Environmental Center, please let CEC staff know when you arrive. Cell phones do not work well at the CEC.

Please contact your child's teacher regarding any responsibility you may have to cover tuition fees. These fees may or may not be covered by the school district.

We look forward to sharing this special experience with you and your children!

Sincerely,

Jessica Shumate, Program Coordinator

Lauren Allred, CEC Director

Jenny Thagard, Living River Executive Director