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<sup>1,2</sup> Corbett, J.B. (2006). *Communicating Nature, How we create and understand environmental messages*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, K. (1998). *Environmental Service-Learning*. St. Louis, MN: Tree Trust.

## **Purpose of the Curriculum Guide**

This curriculum guide provides a series of interdisciplinary activities to learn about John Muir, field studies to conduct at a nature area as an outdoor classroom, and concludes with lessons and practices to help students become stewards of the environment and “champions” in their own community.

Classroom and field assignments require students to read, research, compare, contrast, synthesize, problem solve, work independently and collaboratively. Learning activities apply both oral presentation and writing skills. All lessons in this guide can stand-alone, so teachers may select as few or as many as desired.

Throughout this experience, students participate in a variety of learning opportunities to develop and refine the critical skills they need to be successful in school and make a positive contribution to their communities. Students can engage in activities that prompt individual and collective reflection on controversial topics that stir debate often based on ideology and personal backgrounds. They will learn to look at the HOW of an issue in addition to the WHAT of an issue. These skills can help students engage in thoughtful debates that lead to informed decisions about a shared future on earth.

## **Arrangement of the Guide**

This guide is divided into three sections: 1) Orientation to John Muir, 2) Field Studies and 3) Classroom Projects. The content is arranged to be introduced in order, as students become more familiar with the life of John Muir and increasingly more aware of his or her own roles and responsibilities within the community where he/she lives.

The guide features many different lessons with multiple activities within each lesson, in each of the three sections. A summary of lessons is included at the beginning of each section. These lessons can help students understand the life and work of John Muir with the intention that they will continue in his footsteps to make a positive difference in their respective communities and work to conserve wild places for the benefit of all.

**Orientation to John Muir.** Orients teachers and students to John Muir and the historic site. Materials include classroom activities and a suggested reading list for students describing John Muir’s life. A list of YouTube videos and storyteller recordings of

John Muir's adventures are also included in the student bibliography. Teachers will find a comprehensive list of print, web and organization resources to supplement opportunities for student learning.

**Field studies.** Presents a series of thematic lessons to be conducted outdoors that create relevant connections for the students to John Muir's actions and beliefs, and standard practices of his era.

**Classroom Projects.** Describes suggested activities and supplementary materials on historical, scientific and environmental topics for student research and discussion after field study experiences. Includes opportunities to involve guest speakers, engage the community and participate in real community problem solving.

John Muir wrote and illustrated extensively of his travels and adventures in a series of journals. Classroom projects involve a significant amount of writing.

**Recommendations for Students:** To continue in the spirit of Muir's journal keeping, it is highly recommended that students keep all their work assembled as an ongoing journal in a single 3- ring binder.

- Assists the student keep track of the projects in progress;
- Provides a meaningful student reference upon completion; and simplifies evaluation of student achievement and skill advancement.

John Muir brings a diverse range of themes to be studied. You may consider expanding on lessons of conservation and responsibility to stimulate ideas for creating a "History Day" around his life and accomplishments.

Visit the Sierra Club website to find information about upcoming events, photographs, writing, video, quotes, additional lessons and biographical information about John Muir. [http://vault.sierraclub.org/john\\_muir\\_exhibit/](http://vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/)